

# LETTERS

FROM

A Gentleman in the North of *Scotland*

TO

His FRIEND in *London*;

CONTAINING

The Description of a Capital Town in that  
Northern Country;

WITH

An Account of some uncommon Customs  
of the Inhabitants:

LIKEWISE

An Account of the HIGHLANDS, with the  
*Customs and Manners* of the HIGHLANDERS.

To which is added,

A LETTER relating to the MILITARY WAYS  
among the Mountains, began in the Year 1726.

The whole interspers'd with *Facts* and *Circumstances*  
intirely New to the Generality of People in *England*,  
and little known in the Southern Parts of *Scotland*.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.

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LONDON:

Printed for S. BIRT, in *Ave-Maria-Lane*.

MDCCLIV.



# LETTERS

FROM

A Gentleman in the North of Scotland

TO

His Friend in London

CONTAINING

The Description of a Capital Town in that  
Northern County

WITH

An Account of some ancient Customs  
of the Inhabitants

LIXE WISE

An Account of the History and Customs  
and Manners of the Highlanders

To which is added

A List of the Military Ways  
among the Highlanders in the Year 1790  
The whole  
with a Description of the  
and the History of the



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MDCCLXXXIX



## LETTER XV.



I HAVE hitherto been speaking only of the Part of *Scotland*, where I am, *viz.* the Eastern Side of this Island, bordering upon the northern Mountains, which Part I take to be a Kind of Medium between the *Lowlands* and *Highlands*; both by its Situation, and as it partakes of the Language and Customs of both those Extremes.

IN *England* the Name of *Scotsman* is used discriminately, to signify any one of the Male - Part of the Natives of North *Britain*; but the *Highlanders* differ from the People of the

Low Country in almost every Circumstance of Life. Their Language, Customs, Manners, Dress, &c. are unlike, and neither of them would be contented to be taken for the other ; inſomuch, that in ſpeaking of an unknown Perſon of this Country (I mean *Scotland*) as a *Scotſman* only, it is as indefinite as barely to call a *Frenchman* an *European*, ſo little would his native Character be known by it.

I OWN it may be ſaid, there is a Difference in the other Part of this Iſland, between the *Engliſh* and the *Welſh* ; but I think it is hardly in any Degree to be compar'd with the abovementioned Diſtinction.

You will conclude, I am ſpeaking only of ſuch among the People of *Scotland*, who have not had the Advantages of Fortune and Education ; for *Letters* and *Converſe* with polite Strangers will render all Mankind equal, ſo far as their Genius and Application will admit ; ſome  
few

## LETTER XV. 3

few Prejudices, of no very great Consequence, excepted.

A CROWD of other Remarks and Observations were just now pressing for Admittance, but I have rejected 'em all, as fit only to anticipate some of the Contents of the Sheets that are to follow; and therefore I am now at Liberty to begin my Account of the most northern Part of *Great Britain*, so far as it has fallen within my Knowledge.

THE Highlands take up more than one half of *Scotland*: They extend from *Dunbarton*, near the Mouth of the River *Clyde*, to the northernmost Part of the Island, which is above two hundred Miles, and their Breadth is from fifty to above an Hundred. But how to describe 'em to you, so as to give you any tolerable idea of such a rugged Country; to you, I say, who have never been out of the South of *England*, is, I fear, a Task altogether impracticable.



IF it had been possible for me to procure a Landskip (I should say Heathskip, or Rock-skip) of any one tremendous View among the Mountains, it would be satisfactory and informing at one single Cast of the Eye: But Language, you know, can only communicate Ideas, as it were, by Retail; and a Description of one Part of an Object, which is compos'd of many, defaces or weakens another that went before: Whereas Painting not only shews the whole intire at one View, but leaves the several Parts to be examin'd separately, and at Leisure, by the Eye.

FROM Words we can only receive a Notion of such unknown Objects, as bear some Resemblance with others we have seen; but Painting can even create Ideas of Bodies, utterly unlike to any Thing that ever appear'd to our Sight.

THUS am I entering upon my most difficult Task; for the Customs and  
Manners

Manners of the Highlanders will give me little Trouble more than the Transcribing. But, as I believe I am the first who ever attempted a minute Description of any such Mountains, I cannot but greatly doubt of my Success herein; and nothing but your Friendship and your Request (which to me is a Command) could have engag'd me to hazard my Credit even with you (indulgent as you are) by an Undertaking, wherein the Odds are so much against me.

BUT to begin — The Highlands are, for the greatest Part, compos'd of Hills as it were piled one upon another, till the Complication rises and swells to Mountains; of which the Heads are frequently above the Clouds, and near the Summit have vast Hollows fill'd up with Snow, which, on the North Side, continues all the Year long.

FROM the West Coast they rise as it were, in Progression upwards, toward

6      L E T T E R   X V .

the midland Country, Eastward (for on the East Side of the Island they are not generally quite so high) and their Ridges, for the most Part, run West and East, or near those Points, as do likewise all the yet discover'd Beds or Seams of Minerals they contain; with which, I have good Reason to believe they are well furnish'd.

THIS Position of the Mountains has created Arguments for the Truth of a universal Deluge, as if the Waters had formed those vast Inequalities, by rushing violently from East to West.

THE Summits of the Highest are mostly destitute of Earth, and the huge naked Rocks, being just above the Heath, produce the disagreeable Appearance of a scabbed Head, especially when they appear to the View in a conical Figure; for as you proceed round 'em in Valleys, on lesser Hills, or the Sides of other Mountains, their Form varies according to the Situation of the Eye that beholds 'em.

THEY

THEY are cloath'd with Heath, interspers'd with Rocks, and it is very rare to see any Spot of Grass; for those (few as they are) lie conceal'd, from an outward View, in Flats and Hollows among the Hills. There are indeed some Mountains that have Woods of Fir, or small Oaks on their Declivity, where the Root of one Tree is almost upon a Line, with the Top of another: These are rarely seen in a Journey; what there may be behind, out of all common Ways, I do not know, but none of them will pay for felling and removing over Rocks, Bogs, Precipices and Conveyance by rocky Rivers, except such as are near the Sea-Coast, and hardly those; as I believe the *York-Buildings* Company will find in the Conclusion.

I HAVE already mention'd the Spaces of Snow, near the Tops of the Mountains: They are great Hollows, appearing below as small Spots of white (I will suppose of the Dimensions of a pretty large



Table) but they are so diminish'd to the Eye by their vast Height and Distance, from, perhaps, a Mile, or more in Length, and Breadth proportionable. This I know by Experience, having rid over such a Patch of Snow in the Month of *June*: The Surface was smooth, not slippery, and so hard, my Horse's Feet made little or no Impression on it; and in one Place I rid over a Bridge of Snow, hollow'd into a Kind of Arch. I then made no doubt this Passage for the Water, at Bottom of the deep Burne, was open'd by the Warmth of Springs; of which, I suppose, in dry Weather, the Current was wholly compos'd.

FROM the Tops of the Mountains there descend deep, wide and winding Hollows, plough'd into the Sides, by the Weight and violent Rapidity of the Waters; which often loosen and bring down Stones of an incredible Bigness.

OF one of these Hollows, only Part appears to Sight, in different Places of  
the

the Descent ; the rest is lost to View, in Meanders among the Hills.

WHEN the uppermost Waters begin to appear with white Streaks in these Cavities, the Inhabitants who are within View of the Height, say, *The Grey Mare's Tail begins to grow*, and it serves to them as a Monitor of ensuing Peril, if at that Time they venture far from Home ; because they might be in Danger, by Waters, to have all Communication cut off between them and Shelter or Sustenance. And they are very skillful to judge, in what Course of Time the Rivers and Burnes will become impassable,

THE dashing and foaming of these Cataracts among the Rocks make 'em look exceeding white, by Comparison with the bordering Heath ; but when the Mountains are cover'd with Snow, and that is melting, then those Streams of Water, compar'd with the Whiteness near 'em, look of a dirty yellowish Colour,

10 L E T T E R XV.

Colour, from the Soil and Sulphur mix'd  
with them as they descend. But every  
Thing, you know, is this, or that by  
Comparifon.

I SHALL soon conclude this Descrip-  
tion of the outward Appearance of the  
Mountains, which I am already tired of,  
as a difagreeable Subject, and I believe  
you are fo too; but for your future Eafe  
in that Particular, there is not much  
more Variety in it, but gloomy Spaces,  
different Rocks, Heath, and high, and  
low.

To caft one's Eye from an Eminence  
toward a Group of them, they appear  
ftill one above another, fainter and faint-  
er, according to the airial Perspective,  
and the whole of a difmal gloomy  
Brown, drawing upon a dirty Purple;  
and moft of all difagreeable, when the  
Heath is in Bloom.

THOSE Ridges of the Mountains that  
appear next to the Æther, by their rug-  
ged,

ged irregular Lines, the Heath and black Rocks, are render'd extremely harsh to the Eye, by appearing close to that diaphanous Body, without any Medium to soften the Opposition, and the clearer the Day, the more rude and offensive they are to the Sight; yet in some few Places, where any white Craggs are a-top, that Harshness is something softened.

BUT of all the Views, I think the most horrid is, to look at the Hills from East to West, or *vice versa*; for then the Eye penetrates far among 'em, and sees, more particularly, their stupendous Bulk, frightful Irregularity, and horrid Gloom, made yet more *sombrous* by the Shades and faint Reflections they communicate one to another.

As a Specimen of the Height of those Mountains, I shall here take notice of one in *Lochaber*, call'd *Benevis*; which from the Level below, to that Part of the Summit only, which appears to View,  
has



has been several Times measured by different Artists, and found to be three Quarters of a Mile of perpendicular Height.

It is reckon'd seven *Scots* Miles to that Part, where it begins to be inaccessible.

SOME *English* Officers took it in the Fancy to go to the Top, but could not attain it for Bogs and huge perpendicular Rocks; and when they were got as high as they could go, they found a vast Change in the Quality of the Air, saw nothing but the Tops of other Mountains, and altogether a Prospect of one tremendous Heath, with here and there some Spots of Craggs and Snow.

THIS wild Expedition, in ascending round and round the Hills; in finding accessible Places, helping one another up the Rocks, in Disappointments, and their returning to the Foot of the Mountain, took 'em up a whole Summer's Day,

Day, from five in the Morning. This is according to their own Relation. But they were fortunate in an Article of the greatest Importance to them, *i. e.* That the Mountain happen'd to be free from Clouds while they were in it, which is a Thing not very common in that dabbled Part of the Island, the Western Hills; I say, if those condens'd Vapours had pass'd, while they were at any considerable Height, and had continued, there would have been no Means left for them to find their Way down, and they must have perish'd with Cold, Wet, and Hunger.

IN passing to the Heart of the Highlands, we proceed from bad to worse, which makes the *worst of all* the less surprising; but I have often heard it said, by my Countrymen, that they verily believ'd, if an Inhabitant of the South of *England* were to be brought blindfold into some narrow rocky Hollow, enclos'd with these horrid Prospects, and there to have his Bandage taken off, he would be

14      L E T T E R   XV.

be ready to die with Fear, as thinking it impossible he should ever get out to return to his native Country.

Now what do you think of a poetical Mountain, smooth and easy of Ascent, cloath'd with a verdant flowery Turf, where Shepherds tend their Flocks; sitting under the Shade of tall Poplars, &c.

In short, what do you think of *Richmond* Hill, where we have pass'd so many Hours together, delighted with the beautiful Prospect.

BUT after this Description of these Mountains, it is not unlikely you may ask, of what Use can be such monstrous Excrescencies?

To this I should answer — They contain Minerals, as I said before; and serve for the breeding and feeding of Cattle, wild Fowls and other useful Animals, which cost little or nothing in keeping.

THEY

THEY break the Clouds, and not only replenish the Rivers, but collect great Quantities of Water into Lakes and other vast Reservoirs, where they are husbanded, as I may say, for the Use of Mankind in Time of Drought; and thence, by their Gravity, perforate the Crannies of Rocks, and looser Strata, and work their Way either perpendicularly, horizontally, or obliquely; the two latter, when they meet with solid Rock, Clay, or some other resisting Stratum, till they find proper Passages downward, and, in the End, form the Springs below. And certainly, it is the Deformity of the Hills that makes the Natives conceive of their naked *Straths* and *Glens*, as of the most beautiful Objects in Nature.

BUT, as I suppose you are unacquainted with these Words, I shall, here, take Occasion to explain them to you.



A *Strath* is a flat Space of arable Land, lying along the Side or Sides of some capital River, between the Water and the Feet of the Hills; and keeps its Name 'till the River comes to be confin'd to a narrow Space, by stony Moors, Rocks, or Windings among the Mountains.

THE *Glen* is a little Spot of Corn Country, by the Sides of some small River or Rivulet, likewise bounded by Hills; this is in general; but there are some Spaces that are called Glens, from their being Flats in deep Hollows, between the high Mountains, altho' they are perfectly barren, as *Glen-dou*, or the black Glen, Glen-Almond, &c.

By the Way, this Glen-Almond is a Hollow so very narrow, and the Mountains, on each Side, so steep and high, that the Sun is seen therein no more than between two and three Hours in the longest Day.

Now

Now let us go among the Hills, and see if we can find something more agreeable, than their outward Appearance. And to that End I shall give you the Journal of two Days Progress; which, I believe, will better answer the Purpose than a disjointed Account of the Inconvenience, Hazards, and Hardships, that attend a Traveller in the Heart of the Highlands. But before I begin the particular Account of my Progress, I shall venture at a general Description of one of the Mountain Spaces between Glen and Glen: And when that is done, you may make the Comparison with one of our southern Rambles; in which, without any previous *Route*, we us'd to wander from Place to Place, just so as the Beauty of the Country invited.

How have we been pleas'd with the easy Ascent of an Eminence, which almost imperceptibly brought us to the beautiful Prospects seen from its Summit? What a delightful Variety of Fields,

and Meadows of various Taints of Green, adorn'd with Trees and blooming Hedges; and the whole imbellish'd with Woods, Groves, Waters, Flocks, Herds and magnificent Seats of the Happy (at least seemingly so) and every other rising Ground, opening a new and lovely Landskip.

BUT in one of these *Monts* (as the Highlanders call 'em) soon after your Entrance upon the first Hill you lose, for good and all, the Sight of the Plain from whence you parted; and nothing follows but the View of Rocks and Heath, both beneath and on every Side, with high and barren Mountains round about.

THUS you creep slowly on, between the Hills in rocky Ways, sometimes over those Eminencies, and often on their Declivity, continually hoping the next Ridge before you will be the Summit of the highest, and so often deceiv'd in that Hope, as almost to despair of ever reaching

reaching the Top: And thus you are still rising by long Ascents, and again descending by shorter, 'till you arrive at the highest Ground, from whence you go down in much the same Manner, revers'd, and never have the Glen in View, that you wish to see, as the End of your present Trouble, 'till you are just upon it. And when you are there, the Inconveniencies (tho' not the Hazards) are almost as great as in the tedious Passage to it.

As an Introduction to my Journal, I must acquaint you, that I was advis'd to take with me some cold Provisions, and Oats for my Horses; there being no Place of Refreshment, 'till the End of my first Day's Journey.

The 2d of *October*, 172—

SET out with one Servant, and a Guide: The latter, because no Stranger (or even a Native, unacquainted with the Way) can venture among the Hills, without a Conductor; for if he once



goes aside, and most especially, if Snow should fall (which may happen on the very high Hills, at any Season of the Year.) In that, or any other Case, he may wander into a Bog, to impassable Burnes or Rocks, and every *ne plus ultra* oblige him to change his Course, 'till he wanders from all Hopes of ever again seeing the Face of a human Creature.

OR if he should accidentally hit upon the Way from whence he stray'd, he would not distinguish it from another; there is such a seeming *Sameness* in all the rocky Places.

OR again, If he should happen to meet with some Highlander, and one that was not unwilling to give him Directions, he could not declare his Wants, as being a Stranger to the Language of the Country: In short, one might as well think of making a Sea Voyage without Sun, Moon, Stars, or Compass, as pretend to know which Way to take, when

when lost among the Hills and Mountains.

BUT to return to my Journal, from which I have stray'd, tho' not with much Danger; it being at first setting out, and my Guide with me.

AFTER riding about four Miles of pretty good Road, over heathy Moors, hilly, but none high or of steep Ascent, I came to a small River, where there was a Ferry; for the Water was too deep and rapid to pass the Ford above. The Boat was patch'd almost every where with rough Pieces of Boards, and the Oars were kept in their Places, by small Bands of twisted Sticks.

I COULD not but enquire its Age, seeing it had so many Marks of Antiquity; and was told by the Ferry-man, it had belong'd to his Father, and was above sixty Years old. This put me in mind of the Knife, which was of an extraordinary Age, but had, at Times, been

repair'd with many new Blades and Handles. But in most Places of the Highlands, where there is a Boat (which is very rare) it is much worse than this, and not large enough to receive a Horse; and therefore he is swom at the Stern, while somebody holds up his Head, by a Halter or Bridle.

THE Horses swim very well at first setting out, but if the Water be wide, in Time they generally turn themselves on one of their Sides; and patiently suffer themselves to be dragg'd along.

I REMEMBER, one of these Boats was so very much out of Repair, we were forced to stand upon Clods of Turf, to stop the Leaks in her Bottom, while we pass'd across the River.

I SHALL here conclude, in the Stile of the News-Writers — This to be continued in my next.

L E T T E R



## LETTER XVI.



FROM the River's Side  
I ascended a steep Hill,  
so full of large Stones,  
it was impossible to  
make a Trot : This  
continued up and  
down, about a Mile and Half.

AT Foot of the Hill, tolerable Way  
for a Mile, there being no great Quan-  
tity of Stones among the Heath, but  
very uneven ; and at the End of it a  
small Burne descending from between  
two Hills, worn deep among the Rocks,  
rough, rapid, and steep, and dangerous



to pass. I concluded some Rain had fallen behind the Hills, that were near me; which I could not see, because it had a much greater Fall of Water, than any of the like Kind I had pass'd before.

FROM hence a Hill five Miles over, chiefly compos'd of lesser Hills; so stony, it was impossible to crawl above a Mile in an Hour: But I must except a small Part of it from this general Description; for there ran across this Way (or Road, as they call it) the End of a Wood of Fir-Trees, the only one I had ever pass'd.

THIS, for the most Part, was an easy rising Slope of about half a Mile. In most Places of the Surface, it was Bog about two Feet deep, and beneath was uneven Rock; in other Parts the Rock and Roots of the Trees appear'd to View.

THE Roots sometimes cross'd one another, as they ran along a good Way up-  
on

on the Face of the Rock ; and often above the boggy Part, by both which my Horſe's Legs were ſo much entangled, that I thought it impoſſible to keep them upon their Feet. But you would not have been diſpleas'd to obſerve how the Roots had run along, and felt, as it were, for the Crannies of the Rock ; and there ſhot into 'em, as a Hold againſt the Preſſure of Winds above.

AT the End of this Hill was a River, or rather Rivulet, and near the Edge of it, a ſmall graſſy Spot ; ſuch as I had not ſeen in all my Way, but the Place not inhabited. Here I ſtopt'd to bait. My own Proviſions were laid upon the Foot of a Rock, and the Oats upon a Kind of moſſy Graſs, as the cleaneſt Place for the Horſes feeding.

WHILE I was taking ſome Reſreſhment, Chance provided me with a more agreeable Repaſt ; the Pleaſure of the Mind. I happen'd to eſpy a poor Highlander at a great Height, upon the Declivity

## 26      L E T T E R   XVI.

clivity of a high Hill ; and order'd my Guide to call him down. The *Traucho* (or come hither) seem'd agreeable to him, and he came down with wonderful Celerity, considering the Roughness of the Hill ; and asking what was *my Will* in his Language, he was given to understand I wanted him only to eat and drink. This unexpected Answer rais'd such Joy in the poor Creature, as he could not help shewing it by skipping about, and expressing Sounds of Satisfaction. And when I was retired a little Way down the River, to give the Men an Opportunity of enjoying themselves with less Restraint, there was such Mirth among the Three, as I thought a sufficient Recompense for my former Fatigue.

BUT perhaps you may question how there could be such Merriment, with nothing but Water ?

I CARRIED with me a Quart Bottle of Brandy, for my Man and the Guide ; and for myself, I had always in my  
Journays

Journeys a *Pocket-Pistol*, loaded with Brandy, mix'd with Juice of Lemons (when they were to be had) which again mingled with Water, in a wooden Cup, was upon such Occasions my Table-Drink.

WHEN we had truss'd up our Baggage, I enter'd the Ford, and pass'd it, not without Danger, the Bottom being fill'd with large Stones, the Current rapid, a steep rocky Descent to the Water, and a Rising on the farther Side, much worse; for having mounted a little Way up the Declivity, in turning the Corner of a Rock, I came to an exceeding steep Part before I was aware of it, where I thought my Horse would have gone down backwards, much faster than he went up; but I recover'd a small Flat of the Rock, and dismounted.

THERE was nothing remarkable afterwards, 'till I came near the Top of the Hill; where there was a seeming Plain  
of



of about a hundred and fifty Yards, between me and the Summit.

No sooner was I upon the Edge of it. but my Guide desired me to alight ; and then I perceived it was a Bog, or *Peat-moss*, as they call it.

I HAD Experience enough of these deceitful Surfaces, to order that the Horses should be led in separate Parts ; lest, if one broke the Turf, the other treading in his Steps, might sink.

THE Horse I used to ride, having little Weight but his own, went on pretty successfully ; only now and then breaking the Surface a little, but the other that carry'd my Portmanteau, and being not quite so nimble, was much in Danger, 'till near the further End, and there he sunk. But it luckily happen'd to be in a Part, where his long Legs went to the Bottom, which is generally hard Gravel, or Rock ; but he was in, almost up to the Back.

By

By this Time my own (for Distinction) was quite free of the Bog, and being frightened, stood very tamely by himself; which he would not have done at another Time. In the mean while we were forced to wait at a Distance, while the other was flouncing and throwing the Dirt about him; for there was no Means of coming near him to ease him of the heavy Burthen he had upon his Loins, by which he was sometimes in danger to be turned upon his Back, when he rose to break the Bog before him. But in about a Quarter of an Hour he got out, bedaub'd with the Slough, shaking with Fear, and his Head and Neck all over in a Foam.

THIS Bog was stiff enough at that Time, to bear the Country *Garrons* in any Part of it. But it is observ'd of the *English* Horses, that when they find themselves hamper'd, they stand still, and tremble 'till they sink, and then they struggle violently, and work themselves  
further

further in ; and if the Bog be deep, as most of them are, it is next to impossible to get them out, otherwise than by digging them a Passage. But the little Highland Hobbies, when they find themselves bogg'd, will lie still, 'till they are relieved. And besides being bred in the Mountains, they have learnt to avoid the weaker Parts of the Mire ; and sometimes our own Horses having put down their Heads, and smelt to the Bog, will refuse to enter upon it.

THERE is a certain Lord in one of the most northern Parts, who makes Use of the little Garrons for the Bogs and rough Ways ; but has a fizable Horse led with him, to carry him through the deep and rapid Fords.

As for myself, I was harrafs'd on this Slough, by winding about from Place to Place, to find such Tufts as were within my Stride or Leap, in my heavy Boots with high Heels ; which, by my  
Spring,

Spring, when the little Hillocks were too far asunder, broke the Turf, and then I threw myself down toward the next Protuberance : But to my Guide it seem'd nothing ; he was light of Body, shod with flat *Brogues*, wide in the Soles, and accusom'd to a particular Step, suited to the Occasion.

THIS Hill was about three Quarters of a Mile over, and had but a short Descent on the farther Side. Rough indeed, but not remarkable in this Country.

I HAD now five computed Miles to go, before I came to my first Asylum ; that is, five *Scots* Miles, which, as in the North of *England*, are longer than yours, as three is to two. And if the Difficulty of the Way were to be taken into the Account, it might well be call'd Fifteen.

THIS (except about three Quarters of a Mile of heathy Ground, pretty free from Stones and Rocks) consisted of  
 stony



stony Moors, almost impracticable for a Horse with his Rider; and likewise of rocky Way, where we were oblig'd to dismount, and sometimes climb, and otherwhile slide down. But what vex'd me most of all, they call'd it a Road: Yet after all, I must confess, it was preferable to a boggy Way. The great Difficulty was to wind about with the Horses, and find such Places as they could possibly be got over.

WHEN we came near the Foot of the lowermost Hill, I discover'd a pretty large *Glen*, which before was not to be seen. I believe it might be about a Quarter of a Mile wide, enclos'd by exceeding high Mountains, with nine dwelling Huts; besides a few others of a lesser Size, for Barns and Stables. This they call a Town, with a pompous Name belonging to it; but the Comfort of being near the End of my Day's Journey (heartily tired) was mix'd with the Al-  
lay of a pretty wide River, that ran between me and my Lodging.

HAVING

HAVING pass'd the Hill, I enter'd the River; my Horse being almost at once up to his Midsides. The Guide led him by the Bridle, as he was sometimes climbing over the loose Stones, which lay in all Positions; and many of them two or three Feet diameter. At other Times, with his Nose in the Water, and mounted up behind. Thus he proceeded with the utmost Caution, never removing one Foot, 'till he found the others firm; and all the while seeming impatient of the Pressure of the Torrent, as if he was sensible, that once losing his Footing, he should be driven away, and dash'd against the Rocks below.

IN other rapid Rivers, where I was something acquainted with the Fords, by having pass'd them before, tho' never so stony, I thought the Leader of my Horse to be an Incumbrance to him; and I have always found (as the Rivers, while they are passable, are pretty clear)

the Horse is the surest Judge of his own Safety. Perhaps some would think it strange I speak in this Manner of a Creature, that we proudly call irrational.

THERE is a certain Giddiness attends the violent Passage of the Water, when one is in it, and therefore I always at entering resolv'd to keep my Eye steadily fix'd on some remarkable Stone on the Shore of the farther Side, and my Horse's Ears as near as I could in a Line with it, leaving him to chuse his Steps; for the Rider, especially if he casts his Eye down the Torrent, does not know whether he goes directly forward or not, but fancies he is carried (like the Leeway of a Ship, Sideways) along with the Stream. If he can't forbear looking aside, it's best to turn his Face toward the coming Current.

ANOTHER Precaution is (and you can't use too many) to let your Legs hang in the Water, and where the Stones will permit,

# LETTER XVI. 35

mit, to preserve a firmer Seat; in case of any sudden Slide or Stumble.

By what I have been saying, you will perceive I still retain the Custom of my own Country, in not sending my Servant before me through these dangerous Waters, as is the constant Practice of all the Natives of *Scotland*; nor could I prevail with myself to do so, at least, unless like theirs, mine always went before me in smooth as well as bad Roads. But in that, there are several Inconveniencies, and altho' a Servant may, by some, be contemn'd for his servile Circumstance of Life, I could never bear the Thoughts of exposing him to Dangers for my own Safety and Security; lest he should despise me with more Justice, and in a greater Degree, for the Want of a necessary Resolution and Fortitude.

I SHALL here mention a whimsical Expedient, against the Danger of these Highland Fords.



AN Officer, who was lately quarter'd at one of the Barracks, in a very mountainous Part of the Country, when he travell'd, carry'd with him a long Rope: This was to be put round his Body, under his Arms, and those that attended him were to wade the River, and hold the Rope on the other Side; that if any Accident should happen to him by Depth of Water, or the Failure of his Horse, they might prevent his being carry'd down the Current, and drag him ashore.

THE Instant I had recover'd the farther Side of the River, there appear'd near the Water six Highland Men and a Woman: These I suppose had coasted the Stream over Rocks, and along the Sides of steep Hills; for I had not seen them before.

SEEING they were preparing to wade, I stay'd to observe 'em. First, the Men and the Woman tuck'd up their Petticoats, then they cast themselves into a Rank,

Rank, with the Female in the Middle; and laid their Arms over one another's Shoulders; and I saw they had placed the strongest toward the Stream, as best able to resist the Force of the Torrent.

IN their Passage the large slippery Stones made some of them now and then to loose their Footing; and on those Occasions the whole Rank chang'd Colour and Countenance.

I BELIEVE no Painter ever remark'd so strong Impressions of Fear and Hope on a human Face, with so many and sudden Successions of those two opposite Passions, as I observ'd among those poor People; but in the Highlands this is no uncommon Thing.

PERHAPS you will ask — How does a single Highlander support himself against so great a Force? He bears himself up against the Stream, with a Stick, which he always carries with him for that Purpose.

As I am now at the End of my first Day's Journey, and have no Mind to resume this disagreeable Subject in another Place, I shall ask Leave to mention one Danger more attending the Highland Fords: And that is, the sudden Gushes of Waters that sometimes descend from behind the adjacent Hills; insomuch, that when the River has not been above a Foot deep, the Passenger thinking himself secure, has been overtaken and carried away by the Torrent.

SUCH Accidents have happen'd twice within my Knowledge, in two different small Rivers; both within seven Miles of this Town. One to an Exciseman, and the Messenger who was carrying him from hence to *Edinburgh*, in order to answer some Accusations relating to his Office. The other to two young Fellows of a neighbouring Clan; all drown'd in the Manner abovemention'd: And from these two Instances we may reasonably conclude, that many Accidents of the same Nature have happen'd; especially

cially in more mountainous Parts, and those hardly ever known, but in the narrow Neighbourhoods of the unhappy Sufferers.

WHEN I came to my *Inn*, I found the Stable-Door too low to receive my large Horses, tho' high enough for the Country Garrons, so the Frame was taken out, and a small Part of the Roof pull'd down for their Admittance; for which Damage I had a Shilling to pay the next Morning: My Fear was, the Hut being weak and small, they would pull it about their Ears; for that Mischance had happen'd to a Gentleman, who bore me Company in a former Journey, but his Horses were not much hurt by the Ruins.

WHEN Oats were brought, I found them so light, and so much sprouted, that, taking up a Handful, others hung to 'em, in Succession like a Cluster of Bees; but of such Corn it is the Custom to give double Measure.



My next Care was to provide for myself; and to that End I enter'd the dwelling House. There my Landlady sat with a Parcel of Children about her, some quite, and others almost naked, by a little Peat Fire, in the Middle of the Hutt; and over the Fire-Place was a small Hole in the Roof for a Chimney. The Floor was common Earth, very uneven, and no where dry, but near the Fire; and in the Corners, where no Foot had carry'd the muddy Dirt from without-Doors.

THE Skeleton of the Hut was form'd of small crooked Timber; but the Beam for the Roof was large, out of all Proportion. This is to render the Weight of the whole more fit to resist the violent Flurries of Wind, that frequently rush into the Plains, from the Openings of the Mountains; for the whole Fabrick was set upon the Surface of the Ground, like a Table, Stool, or other Moveable.

HENCE

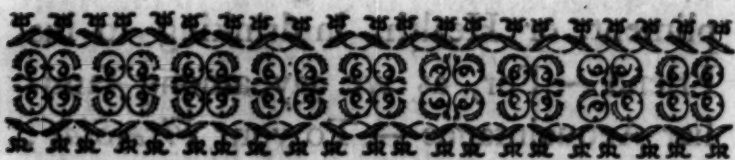
HENCE comes the Highlander's Compliment, or Health, in drinking to his Friend — For, as we say among familiar Acquaintance — To your *Fire-Side*; he says much to the same Purpose — To your *Roof Tree*, alluding to the Family's Safety from Tempests.

THE Walls were about four Feet high, lined with Sticks watled like a Hurdle, built on the Out-side with Turf; and thinner Slices of the same serv'd for Tiling. This last they call *Divet*.

WHEN the Hut has been built some Time, it is cover'd with Weeds and Grass; and I do assure you I have seen Sheep, that had got up from the Foot of an adjoining Hill, feeding upon the Top of the House.

IF there happens to be any Continuance of dry Weather, which is pretty rare, the Worms drop out of the *Divet*, for want of Moisture; insomuch that I have shudder'd at the Apprehension of their falling into the Dish, when I have been eating.

L E T T E R



## LETTER XVII.



T a little Distance, was another Hut, where Preparations were making for my Reception. It was something less, but contain'd two Beds, or Boxes to lie in, and was kept as an Apartment, for People of Distinction; or, which is all one, for such as seem by their Appearance to promise Expence. And indeed, I have often found but little Difference in that Article, between one of those Huts and the best Inn in *England*. Nay, if I were to reckon the Value of what I had for my own Use, by the Country Price, it would appear to be ten Times dearer: But it is not  
the

the Maxim of the Highlands alone (as we know) that those who travel must pay for such as stay at Home; and really the Highland Gentlemen themselves are less scrupulous of Expence in these public Huts, than any where else. And their Example, in great Measure, authorises Impositions upon Strangers, who may complain, but can have no Redress.

THE Landlord not only sits down with you, as in the northern Lowlands, but in some little Time asks Leave (and sometimes not) to introduce his Brother, Cousin, or more, who are all to drink your Honour's Health in *Uisky*; which, tho' a strong Spirit, is to them like Water. And this I have often seen 'em drink out of a Scollop Shell. And in other Journeys, notwithstanding their great Familiarity with me, I have several Times seen my Servant at a Loss how to behave, when the Highlander has turn'd about, and very formally drank to him: And when I have baited,  
and



and eaten two or three Eggs, and nothing else to be had, when I ask'd the Question, What is there for eating? The Answer has been, Nothing for you, Sir; but Sixpence for your Man.

THE Host, who is rarely other than a Gentleman, is Interpreter between you and those who don't speak *English*; so that you lose nothing of what any one has to say relating to the Antiquity of their Family, or the heroick Actions of their Ancestors in War, with some other Clan.

If the Guest be a Stranger, not seen before, by the Man of the House, he takes the first Opportunity to enquire of the Servant, from whence his Master came, who he is, whither he is going, and what his Business in that Country? And if the Fellow happens to be surly, as thinking the Enquiry impertinent, perhaps chiefly from the Highlander's poor Appearance, then the Master is sure to be subtilly sifted (if not ask'd) for the Secret

Secret ; and if obtain'd, it is a Help to Conversation, with his future Guests.

NOTICE at last was brought me, that my Apartment was ready ; but at going out from the first Hovel, the other seem'd to be all on Fire within : For the Smoke came pouring out, through the Ribs and Roof all over ; but chiefly out at the Door, which was not four Feet high, so that the whole made the Appearance (I have seen) of a fuming Dunghil remov'd, and fresh pil'd up again, and pretty near the same in Colour, Shape, and Size.

By the Way, the Highlanders say, they love the Smoke ; it keeps 'em warm. But I retir'd to my first Shelter, 'till the Peats were grown red, and the Smoke thereby abated.

THIS Fewel is seldom kept dry, for want of Convenience, and that is one Reason why, in lighting, or replenishing the Fire, the Smoakyness continues so long

46      L E T T E R   X V I I .

long a Time. And *Moggy's* puffing of it with her Petticoat instead of a Pair of Bellows, is a dilatory Way.

I BELIEVE you would willingly know (being an *Englishman*) what I had to eat. My Fare was a Couple of roasted *Hens* (as they call 'em) very poor, new kill'd, the Skins much broke with plucking; black with Smoke, and greaz'd with bad Butter.

As I had no great Appetite to that Dish, I spoke for some hard Eggs; made my Supper of the Yolks, and wash'd 'em down with a Bottle of good small Claret.

My Bed had clean Sheets and Blankets; but which was best of all (tho' Negative) I found no Inconvenience from those troublesome Companions, with which most other Huts abound. But the bare Mention of 'em brings to my Remembrance a Passage between two Officers of the Army, the Morning after a Highland Night's Lodging.

ONE

ONE was taking off the slowest Kind of the two, when the other cry'd out, Z——ds, what are you doing? — Let us first secure the Dragoons; we can take the Foot at Leisure.

BUT I had like to have forgot a Mis-chance, that happen'd to me the next Morning; for rising early, and getting out of my Box pretty hastily, I unluckily set my Foot in the Chamber-Pot, a Hole in the Ground by the Bed-side, which was made to serve for that Use, in case of Occasion.

I SHALL not trouble you with any Thing that pass'd, 'till I mounted on Horse-back, only for want of something more proper for Breakfast, I took up with a little Brandy, Water, Sugar, and Yolks of Eggs, beat up together; which I think they call *Old-Man's Milk*.

I WAS now provided with a new Guide, for the Skill of my first extended no farther than this Place; but this  
could



could speak no *English*, which I found afterwards to be an Inconvenience.

*Second Day.*

AT mounting I received many Compliments from mine Host; but the most earnest was, that common one of wishing me *good Weather*. For, like the Seafaring Man, my Safety depended upon it; especially at that Season of the Year.

As the Plain lay before me, I thought it all fit for Culture; but in riding along, I observ'd a good deal of it was Bog, and here and there Rock even with the Surface: However, my Road was smooth; and if I had had Company with me, I might have said jestingly, as was usual among us, after rough Way; *Come, let us ride this over again.*

AT the End of about a Mile, there was a steep Ascent, which they call a *Carne*; that is an exceeding stony Hill, which at some Distance seems to have

have no Space at all, between Stone and Stone. I thought I could compare it with no Ruggedness, so aptly as to suppose it like all the different Stones in a Mason's Yard, thrown promiscuously upon one another. This I pass'd on Foot, at the Rate of about half a Mile in the Hour. I do not reckon the Time that was lost, in backing my Horses out of a narrow Place without side of a Rock; where the Way ended with a Precipice of about twenty Feet deep. Into this Gap they were led by the Mistake, or Carelessness of my Guide. The Descent from the Top of this Carne was short, and thence I ascended another Hill, not so stony; and at last, by several others, (which tho' very rough, are not reckon'd extraordinary in the Highlands) I came to a Precipice of about an hundred Yards in Length.

THE Side of the Mountain below me was almost perpendicular; and the rest above, which seem'd to reach the Clouds, was exceeding steep. The Path which

Highlanders and their little Horses had worn, was scarcely two Feet wide, but pretty smooth, and below was a Lake, whereinto vast Pieces of Rock had fallen, which I suppose had made, in some Measure, the Steepness of the Precipice ; and the Water that appear'd between some of them, seem'd to be under my Stirrup. I really believe the Path where I was, is twice as high from the Lake, as the Cross of *St. Paul's* is from *Ludgate-Hill* : And I thought I had good Reason to think so ; because a few Huts beneath, on the farther Side of the Water, which is not very wide, appear'd to me, each of 'em, like a black Spot, not much bigger than the Standish before me.

A CERTAIN Officer of the Army going this Way, was so terrified with the Sight of the Abyss, that he crept a little higher ; fondly imagining he should be safer above, as being further off from the Danger, and so to take hold of the Heath in his Passage : There, a panick Terror seiz'd him, and he began to lose his Forces, finding it impracticable to proceed,

ceed, and being fearful to quit his Hold, and slide down, lest in so doing he should overshoot the narrow Path; and had not two Soldiers came to his Assistance, *viz.* One who was at some little Distance before him, and the other behind, in all Probability he had gone to the Bottom. But I have observ'd, that particular Minds are wrought upon by particular Dangers, according to their different Sets of Ideas. I have sometimes travell'd in the Mountains with Officers of the Army, and have known one in the Middle of a deep and rapid Ford, cry out, he was undone; another was terrified with the Fear of his Horse's falling in an exceeding rocky Way; and perhaps neither of 'em would be so much shock'd at the Danger that so greatly affected the other. Or, it may be, either of 'em at standing the Fire of a Battery of Cannon.

But for my own Part, I had pass'd over two such Precipices before, which render'd it something less terrifying; yet,



as I have hinted, I chose to ride it, as I did the last of the other two, knowing by the first I was liable to fear, and that my Horse was not subject either to that disarming Passion, or to Giddiness; which, in that Case, I take to be the Effect of Apprehension.

IT is a common Thing for the Natives to ride their Horses over such little Precipices; but for myself, I never was upon the Back of one of 'em. And by the Account some Highlanders have given me of them, I think I should never chuse it in such Places as I have been describing.

THERE is in some of those Paths, at the very Edge or Extremity, a little mossy Grass; and those *Sheltys*, being never shod, if they are ever so little Footsore, they will, to favour their Feet, creep to the very Brink, which must certainly be very terrible to a Stranger.

It will hardly ever be out of my Memory, how I was haunted by a Kind of poetical

poetical Sentence, after I was over this Precipice ; which did not cease 'till it was supplanted by the new Fear of my Horse's falling among the Rocks, in my Way from it.

It was this :

“ There hov'ring Eagles wait the  
“ fatal Trip.”

By the Way this Bird is frequently seen among the Mountains, and I may say, severely felt, sometimes, by the Inhabitants, in the Loss of their Lambs, Kids, and even Calves and Colts.

I HAD now gone about six Miles, and had not above two, as I understood afterwards, to the Place of baiting.

IN my Way (which I shall only say, was very rough and hilly) I met a Highland Chieftain with fourteen Attendants, whose Officers about his Person I shall hereafter describe ; at least the greatest

Part of 'em. When we came, as the Sailor says, almost Broad-side and Broad-side, he eyed me, as if he would look my Hat off; but as he was at Home, and I a Stranger in the Country, I thought he might have made the first Overture of Civility, and therefore I took little Notice of him and his ragged Followers.

ON his Part he seem'd to shew a Kind of Disdain at my being so slenderly attended, with a Mixture of Anger, that I shew'd him no Respect before his Vassals; but this might only be my Surmise, yet it look'd very like it.

I SUPPOS'D he was going to the Glen, from whence I came (for there was no other Hut in all my Way,) and there he might be satisfied by the Landlord who I was, &c.

I SHALL not trouble you with any more at present, than that I safely arriv'd at my baiting Place; for, as I hinted before,

before, there is such a Sameness in the Parts of the Hills, that the Description of one rugged Way, Bog, Ford, &c. will serve pretty well to give you a Notion of the rest.

HERE I desired to know what I could have for Dinner; and was told there was some undress'd Mutton. This I esteem'd as a Rarity, but as I did not approve the Fingers of either Maid or Mistress, I order'd my Man (who is an excellent Cook so far as a Beef-Stake, or a Mutton-Chop) to broil me a Chop or two, while I took a little Turn to ease my Legs; weary with sitting so long on Horseback.

THIS prov'd an intolerable Affront to my Landlady, who rav'd and storm'd, and said, What's your Master! I have dress'd for the Laird of this, and the Laird of that, such and such Chiefs; and this very Day, says she, for the Laird of —— who I doubted not was the Person I met on the Hill.



To be short, she absolutely refus'd to admit of any such Innovation, and so the Chops serv'd for my Man and the Guide ; and I had Recourse to my former Fare, hard Eggs.

EGGS are seldom wanting at the public Huts ; tho' by the Poverty of the Poultry, one might wonder how they should have any Inclination to produce 'em.

HERE was no Wine to be had ; but as I carried with me a few Lemons in a Net, I drank some small Punch for Refreshment. When my Servant was preparing the Liquor, my Landlord came to me, and ask'd me seriously, if those were Apples he was squeezing ? And indeed, there are as many Lemon-Trees as Apple-Trees in that Country ; or have they any Kind of Fruit in their Glens that I know of.

THEIR

THEIR Huts are mostly built on some rising rocky Spot, at the Foot of an Hill, secure from any Burne or Springs, that might descend upon them from the Mountains; and thus situated, they are pretty safe from Inundations from above, or below, and other Ground they cannot spare from their Corn. And even upon the Skirts of the Highlands, where the Laird has indulg'd two or three Trees not far from his House, I have heard the Tenant lament the Damage done by the Droppings and Shades of 'em, as well as the Space taken up by the Trunks and Roots.

THE only Fruit the Natives have, that I have seen, is the Bilberry; which is mostly found near Springs, in Hollows of the Heaths. The Taste of them, to me, is not very agreeable; but they are much esteem'd by the Inhabitants, who eat them with their Milk. Yet in the Mountain-Woods, which for the most Part are distant and difficult of Access, there

there are Nuts, Rasberries, and Strawberries ; the two last, tho' but small, are very grateful to the Taste ; but those Woods are so rare, (at least it has always appear'd so to me) that few of the Highlanders are near enough to partake of the Benefit.

I now set out on my last Stage, of which I had gone about five Miles, in much the same Manner as before, when it began to rain below ; but it was Snow above, to a certain Depth from the Summits of the Mountains.

IN about half an Hour afterwards, at the End of near a Mile, there arose a most violent Tempest. This, in a little Time, began to scoop the Snow from the Mountains, and made such a furious *Drift*, which did not melt as it drove, that I could hardly see my Horse's Head.

THE Horses were blown aside from Place to Place, as often as the sudden Gusts

Gusts came on, being unable to resist those violent Eddy-Winds; and at the same Time they were very near blinded with the Snow.

Now I expected no less than to perish; was hardly able to keep my Saddle, and for Increase of Misery, my Guide led me out of the Way, having entirely lost his Land-marks.

WHEN he perceiv'd his Error, he fell down on his Knees by my Horse's Side, and in a beseeching Posture, with his Arms extended; and in a howling Tone, he seem'd to ask Forgiveness.

I IMAGIN'D what the Matter was, for I could but just see him, and that too, by Fits; and spoke to him with a soft Voice, to signify I was not in Anger. And it appear'd afterwards, that he expected to be shot; as they have a dreadful Notion of the *English*.

Thus finding himself in no Danger of my Resentment, he address'd himself



60      L E T T E R   X V I I .

self to the searching about for the Way, from which he had deviated ; and, in some little Time, I heard a Cry of Joy, and he came and took my Horſe by the Bridle, and never afterwards quitted it, 'till we came to my new Lodging, which was about a Mile : For it was almoſt as dark as Night. In the mean Time I had given Directions to my Man, for keeping cloſe to my Horſe's Heels, and if any Thing ſhould prevent it, to call to me immediately ; that I might not loſe him.

As good Luck would have it, there was but one ſmall River in my Way ; and the Ford, tho' deep and winding, had a ſmooth ſandy Bottom, which is very rare in the Highlands.

THERE was another Circumſtance favourable to us, (I ſhall not name a third as one, which is our being not far from the Village ; for we might have periſh'd with Cold in the Night, as well near it, as farther off) there had not a very  
great

great Quantity of Snow fallen upon the Mountains, because the Air began a little to clear, tho' very little, within about a Quarter of a Mile of the Glen; otherwise we might have been buried in some Cavity hid from us, by the Darkeness and the Snow.

BUT if this Drift had happen'd to us upon some one of the wild Moors, had continued, and we had had far to go, we might have perish'd; notwithstanding the Knowledge of any Guide whatever.

THESE Drifts are, above all other Dangers, dreaded by the Highlanders; for my own Part, I could not but think of Mr. *Addison's* short Description of a Whirlwind, in the wild sandy Desarts of *Numidia*.



# L E T T E R XVIII.



VERY high Wind, in many Places of the Highlands, is a Whirlwind. The agitated Air pouring into the narrow and high Spaces between the Mountains, being confin'd in its Courfe ; and if I may use the Expression, push'd on by a crowding Rear, 'till it comes to a bounded Hollow, or Kind of Amphitheatre : I say, the Air, in that violent Motion, is there continually repell'd by the opposite Hill, and rebounded from others, 'till it finds a Passage ; insomuch that I have seen in the Western Highlands, in such a Hollow,

low, some scattering Oaks, with their Bark twisted, almost as if it had been done with a Laver.

THIS I suppose was effected, when they were young ; and consequently, the rest of their Growth was in that Figure. And I myself have met with such Rebuffs on every Side, from the Whirling of such Winds, as are not easy to be described.

WHEN I came to my Inn, (you will think the Word a Burlesque) I found it a most wretched Hovel, with several pretty large Holes in the Sides ; and, as usual, exceeding smoaky.

MY Apartment had a Partition about four Feet high, which separated it from the Lodging of the Family. And being enter'd, I called for Straw or Heather, to stop the Gaps. Some Straw was brought ; but no sooner was it apply'd, but it was pull'd away on the Outside.

THIS



THIS put me in very ill Humour, thinking some malicious Highlander did it to plague or affront me ; and therefore I sent my Man (who had just hous'd his Horses, and was helping me) to see who it could be, and immediately he return'd laughing, and told me it was a poor hungry Cow, that was got to the Backside of the Hut for Shelter, and was pulling out the Straw for Provender.

THE Smoke being something abated, and the Edifice repair'd, I began to reflect on the miserable State I had lately been in, and esteem'd that very Hut, which at another Time I should have greatly despised, to be to me as good as a Palace ; and like a keen Appetite, with ordinary Fare, I enjoy'd it accordingly, not envying even the Inhabitants of *Buckingham-House*.

HERE I conclude my Journal, which I fear you will think as barren and tedious as the Ground I went over ; but I must

must ask your Patience a little while longer concerning it, as no great Reason yet appears to you why I should come to this wretched Place, and go no further.

By a Change of the Wind, there happen'd to fall a good deal of Rain in the Night; and I was told by my Landlord, the Hills presaged more of it: That a wide River before me was become impassable, and if I remain'd longer in the Hills at that Season of the Year, I might be shut in for most Part of the Winter; for, if fresh Snow should fall, and lie lower down on the Mountains, than it did the Day before, I could not repass the Precipice, and must wait 'till the Lake was frozen so hard, as to bear my Horses: And even then it was dangerous in those Places, where the Springs bubble up from the Bottom, and render the Ice thin, and incapable to bear any great Weight. But that, indeed those weak Spots might be avoided, by Means of a skilful Guide.

As to the narrow Path, he said he was certain, that any Snow which might have lodg'd on it from the Drift, was melted by the Rain; which was then ceased. To all this, he added a Piece of News (not very prudently, as I thought) which was, that some Time before I pass'd the Precipice, a poor Highlander leading over it, his Horse loaden with *Greels*, or small Paniers, one of them struck against the upper Part of the Hill, as he suppos'd; and whether the Man was endeavouring to save his Horse, or how it was he could not tell, but that they both fell down, and were dash'd to Pieces among the Rocks. This, to me was very affecting, especially as I was to pass the same Way in my Return.

Thus I was prevented from meeting a Number of Gentlemen of a Clan, who were to have assembled in a Place assign'd for our Interview, about a Day and Half's Journey farther in the Hills; and on the other Side of the River were  
Numbers

Numbers of Highlanders waiting to conduct me to 'em. But I was told, before I enter'd upon this Peregrination, that no Highlander would venture upon it at that Time of the Year; yet I piqued myself upon following the unreasonable Directions of such as knew nothing of the Matter.

Now I return'd with as hasty Steps as the Way you have seen would permit, having met with no more Snow or Rain, 'till I got into the lower Country; and then there fell a very great *Storm* (as they call it) for by the Word *Storm* they only mean Snow. And you may believe I then hugg'd myself, as being got clear of the Mountains.

BUT before I proceed to give you some Account of the Natives, I shall (in Justice) say something relating to Part of the Country of *Athol*, which, tho' Highlands, claims an Exception from the preceding general and gloomy Descriptions; as may likewise some other Places, not far distant from the Borders



of the Lowlands, which I have not seen.

THIS Country is said to be a Part of the ancient *Caledonia*. The Part I am speaking of is a Tract of Land, or *Strath*, which lies along the Sides of the *Tay*; a capital River of the Highlands.

THE Mountains, tho' very high, have an easy Slope a good Way up, and are cultivated in many Places; and inhabited by Tenants, who, like those below, have a different Air from other Highlanders in the Goodness of their Dress, and Chearfulness of their Countenances.

THE *Strath*, or Vale is wide, and beautifully adorn'd with Plantations of various Sorts of Trees. The Ways are smooth, and in one Part you ride in pleasant Glades; in another you have an agreeable Vista. Here you pass through Corn-Fields; there you ascend a small Height, from whence you have a pleasing Variety of that wild and spacious River, Woods, Fields, and neighbouring

ing Mountains, which altogether give a greater Pleasure than the most romantic Description in Words, heighten'd by a lively Imagination can possibly do. But the Satisfaction seem'd beyond Expression, by comparing it in our Minds with the rugged Ways and horrid Prospects of the more northern Mountains, when we pass'd southward from them, through this Vale to the low Country. But with respect to *Athol* in general, I must own, that some Parts of it are very rugged and dangerous.

I SHALL not pretend to give you (as a People) the Original of the Highlanders, having no certain Materials for that Purpose. And indeed, that Branch of History, with Respect even to Commonwealths and Kingdoms, is generally either obscur'd by Time, falsify'd by Tradition, or render'd fabulous by Invention; nor do I think it would be of any great Importance, could I trace them up to their Source with Certainty. But I am persuaded they came from *Ireland*,

in regard their Language is a Corruption of the *Irish* Tongue.

SPENCER, in his *View of the State of Ireland*, written in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, sets forth the Dress and Customs of the *Irish*; and if I remember right, they were at that Time very near what the People are now in the Highlands. But this is, by the bye, as having little Relation to Antiquity; for Dress is variable, and Customs may be abolished by Authority; but Language will baffle the Efforts even of a Tyrant.

THE Highlanders are exceeding proud to be thought an unmix'd People, and are apt to upbraid the *English* with being a Composition of all Nations; but for my own Part, I think a little Mixture in that Sense would do themselves no Manner of Harm.

THE Stature of the better Sort, so far as I can make the Comparifon, is much the same with the *English*, or Low-Country *Scots*, but the common People are generally small; nor is it likely, that  
by

by being half starv'd in the Womb, and never afterwards well fed, they should, by that Means, be render'd larger than other People.

How often have I heard 'em describ'd in *London*, as almost Giants in Size; and certainly there are a great many tall Men of them, in and about that City: But the Truth is, when a young Fellow of any Spirit happens (as *Kite* says) to be born to be a *great Man*, he leaves the Country to put himself into some foreign Service (chiefly in the Army) but the short ones are not commonly seen in other Countries than their own. I have seen a hundred of them together come down to the Lowlands for Harvest-Work, as the *Welsh* come to *England* for the same Purpose; and but few fizable Men among them, and their Women are generally very small.

It has been said, likewise, that *none* of them are deformed by Crookedness: 'Tis true I have not seen many; for as I observ'd of the People bordering upon



the Highlands, none are spoil'd by over Care of their Shapes. But is it to be suppos'd, that Children who are left to themselves, when hardly able to go alone in such a rugged Country, are free from all Accidents? Assertions so general are ridiculous.

THEY are also said to be very healthy, and free from Distempers, notwithstanding the great Hardships they endure. Surely an Account of that Country from a Native, is not unlike a *Gascon's* Account of himself. I own they are not very subject to Maladies, occasion'd by Luxury, but very liable to Fluxes, Fevers, Agues, Coughs, Rheumatisms, and other Distempers, incident to their Way of living; especially upon the Approach of Winter, of which I am a Witness.

By the Way, the poorer Sort are persuaded, that Wine or strong Malt Drink is a very good Remedy in a Fever; and tho' I never prescribed either of them, I have administer'd both with as good Success,

Success, as any Medicines prescribed by Doctor *Radcliffe*.

ÆSCULAPIUS, even as a God, could hardly have had a more solemn Act of Adoration paid him, than I had lately from a Highlander ; at whose Hut I lay in one of my Journeys. His Wife was then desperately ill of a Fever, and I left a Bottle of *Chateau Margbut* behind me to comfort her, if she should recover ; for I had then several Horses loaden with Wine and Provisions, and a great Retinue of Highlanders with me.

THE poor Man fell down on his Knees in this dirty Street, and eagerly kiss'd my Hand ; telling me in *Irish*, I had cured his Wife with my good Stuff.

THIS caused several Jokes from my Countrymen, who were present, upon the poor Fellow's Value for his Wife ; and the Doctor himself did not escape their Mirth upon that Occasion.

HAVING

HAVING Yesterday proceeded thus far in my Letter, in order to have the less Writing this Evening, I had a Retrospection in the Morning to my Journal; and could not but be of Opinion that some few Additions were necessary to give you a clearer Notion of the inner Part of the Country, in Regard the Incidents in that Account are confin'd to one short Progress, which could not take in all that is wanting to be known, for the Purpose intended.

THERE are few Days that pass without some Rain or Snow in the Hills, and it seems necessary it should be so (if we may suppose Nature ever intended the worst Parts as Habitations for human Creatures) for the Soil is so shallow and stony, and in Summer the Reflection of the Sun's Heat from the Sides of the Rocks is so strong, by Reason of the Narrowness of the Vales, to which may be added the violent Winds; that otherwise the little Corn they have would

be entirely dry'd, and burnt up for want of proper Moisture.

THE Clouds in their Passage often sweep along, beneath the Tops of the high Mountains, and when they happen to be above them, they are drawn as they pass along, by Attraction, to the Summits, in plain and visible Streams or Streaks; where they are broke, and fall in vast Quantities of Water. Nay, it is pretty common in the high Country for the Clouds, or some very dense Exhalation, to drive along the Part, which is there call'd the Foot of the Hills, tho' very high above the Level of the Sea; and I have seen, more than once, a very fair Rainbow describ'd, at not above thirty or forty Yards Distance from me, and seeming of much the same Diameter, having each Foot of the Semi-circle upon the Ground.

AN *English* Gentleman, one Day, as we stopt to consider this Phænomenon, propos'd to ride into the Rainbow, and tho'



tho' I told him the fruitless Consequence, since it was only a Vision made by his Eye, being at that Distance; having the Sun directly behind, and before him, the thick Vapour that was passing along, at the Foot of the Hill. Yet (the Place being smooth) he set up a Gallop, and found his Mistake, to my great Diversion with him afterwards, upon his Confession that he had soon entirely lost it.

I HAVE often heard it told by Travelers, as a Proof of the Height of *Teneriff*, that the Clouds sometimes hide Part of that Mountain, and at the same Time the Top of it is seen above 'em; nothing is more ordinary than this in the Highlands. But I would not therefore be thought to insinuate, that these are as high as that; but they may, you see, be brought under the same Description.

THUS you find the immediate Source of the Rivers and Lakes in the Mountains, is the Clouds, and not as our Rivers, which have their Original from subterraneous Aqueducts, that rise in Springs

Springs below ; but among the Hills the Waters fall in great Cascades, and vast Cataracts, and pass with prodigious Rapidity through large rocky Channels, with such a Noise as almost deafens the Traveller, whose Way lies along by their Sides. And when these Torrents rush through Glens or wider Straths, they often plough up, and sweep away with them, large Spots of the Soil, leaving nothing behind but Rock or Gravel, so that the *Land* is never to be recover'd. And for this, a proportionable Abatement is made in the Tenant's Rent.

THE Lakes are very differently situated, with Respect to high and low. There be those which are vast Cavities fill'd up with Water, whereof the Surface is but little higher than the Level of the Sea ; but of a surprizing Depth. As *Lake Ness*, for the Purpose which has been ignorantly held, to be without a Bottom ; but was sounded by an experienced Seaman, when I was present, and appear'd to be 130 Fathom, or 260 Yards deep.

IT

It seems to be supply'd by two small Rivers at its Head; but the great Increase of Water is from the Rivers, Burnes, and Cascades from the high Mountains, by which it is bounded at the Water's Edge. And it has no other visible Issue, but by the River *Ness*, which is not large, or has the Lake any perceptible Current; being so spacious as more than a Mile in Breadth, and twenty one in Length. At a Place call'd *Foyers*, there is a steep Hill close to it, of about a Quarter of a Mile to the Top, from whence a River pours into the Lake, by three successive wild Cataracts, over romantick Rocks; whereon at each Fall it dashes with such Violence, that in windy Weather the Side of the Hill is hid from Sight for a good Way together, by the Sprey that looks like a thick Body of Smoke. This Fall of Water has been compar'd with the Cataracts of the *Tyber*, by those who have seen them both.

THERE

THERE are other Lakes in large Hollows, on the Tops of exceeding high Hills; I mean, they seem to any one below, who has only heard of 'em, to be on the utmost Height. But this is a Deception; for there are other Hills behind unseen, from whence they are supply'd with the great Quantity of Water they contain. And it is impossible that the Rain, which falls within the Compass of one of those Cavities, should not only be the Cause of such a profound Depth of Water, but also supply the Drainings that descend from it; and issue out in Springs from the Sides of the Hills.

THERE be smaller Lakes, which are also seated high above the Plain, and are stor'd with Trout; tho' it seems impossible, by the vast Steepness of the Burnes on every visible Side, that those Fish should have got up thither from Rivers or Lakes below. This has often mov'd the Question, *How came they there?* But they may have ascended by small Waters,



80 L E T T E R XVIII.

ters, in long Windings out of Sight behind; and none steep enough to cause a Wonder; for I never found there was any Notion of their being brought thither for Breed.

BUT I had like to have forgot, that some will have them to have sprung from the Fry, carry'd from other Waters; and dropt in those small Lakes, by Water-Fowl.

IN a Part of the Highlands, call'd *Strath-glass*, there is a Lake too high by its Situation, to be much affected by the Reflection of Warmth from the Plain, and too low between the Mountains, which almost join together, to admit the Rays of the Sun; for the only Opening to it is on the North Side. Here the Ice continues all the Year round; and tho' it yields a little on the Surface, to the Warmth of the circumambient Air by Day, in Summer-Time, yet at the Return of Night it begins to freeze as hard as ever. This I have been assur'd of, not only by the Proprietor himself, but by several

several others, in and near that Part of the Country.

I HAVE seen in a rainy Day, from a Conflux of Waters above, on a distant high Hill, the Side of it cover'd over with Water by an Overflowing; for a very great Spaw, as you may have seen the Water pour over the Brim of a Cistern, or rather, like its being cover'd over with a Sheet, and upon the peeping out of the Sun the reflected Rays have dazzled my Eyes to such a Degree, as if they were directed to 'em by the Focus of a burning Glass.

So much for Lakes.

IN one Expedition where I was well attended, as I have said before, there was a River in my Way so dangerous, that I was set upon the Shoulders of four Highlanders; my Horse not being to be trusted to in such Roughness, Depth, and Rapidity. And I really thought

VOL. II.

G

some

sometimes, we should all have gone together.

IN the same Journey the Shoulders of some of them were employ'd to ease the Horses, down from Rock to Rock; and all that long Day I could make out but nine Miles. This also was call'd a Road.

TOWARD the End of another Progress in my Return to this Town, after several Hazards from increasing Waters, I was at Length stopp'd by a small River, that was become impassable. There happen'd luckily for me, to be a publick Hut in this Place, for there was no going back again; but there was nothing to drink, except the Water of the River.

THIS I regretted the more, as I had refused at one of the Barracks to accept of a Bottle of Old Hock, on Account of the Carriage, and believing I should reach hither before Night. In about three Hours after my Arrival at this Hut,  
there

there appear'd on the other Side of the Water a Parcel of Merchants, with little Horses loaded with Roundlets of *Usky*.

WITHIN Sight of the Ford was a Bridge (as they call'd it) made for the Convenience of this Place. It was compos'd of two small Fir-Trees not squared at all, laid one beside the other, across a narrow Part of the River, from Rock to Rock. There were Gaps and Intervals between those Trees, and beneath a most tumultuous Fall of Water.

SOME of my Merchants bestriding the Bridge, edg'd forwards, and mov'd the *Usky* Vessels before 'em; but the others afterwards, to my Surprise, walk'd over this dangerous Passage, and dragg'd their *Garrons* through the Torrent, while the poor little Horses were almost drown'd with the Surge.

I HAPPEN'D to have a few Lemons left, and with them I so far qualified the ill Taste of the Spirit, as to make it to-



lerable ; but Eatables there were none except Eggs, and poor starv'd Fowls as usual.

THE *Uſky* Men were my Companions, whom it was expected I ſhould treat according to Cuſtom ; there being no Partition to ſeparate them from me. And thus I paſſ'd a Part of the Day, and great Part of the Night in the Smoke, and dreading the Bed.

BUT my perſonal Hazards, Wants, and Inconveniencies among the Hills, have been ſo many, that I ſhall trouble you with no more of 'em ; or very ſparingly, if I do at all.

SOME of the Bogs are of large Extent, and many People have been loſt in 'em ; eſpecially after much Rain in Time of Snow, as well as in the leſſer *Moffes*, as they call 'em, where, in digging of Peat, there have been found Fir-Trees of a good Magnitude, buried deep, and almoſt as hard as Ebony.

THIS,

THIS, like the Situation of the Mountains, is attributed to *Noah's* Flood ; for they conclude the Trees have lain there ever since that Time, tho' it may be easily otherwise accounted for. But what seems extraordinary to Strangers, is, that there are often deep Bogs on the Declivities of Hills ; and the higher you go, the more you are bogg'd.

IN a Part call'd *Glengary*, in my Return hither from the West Highlands, I found a Bog, or a Part of one, had been wash'd down by some violent Torrent, from the Top of a high Hill into the Plain ; and the steep Sloap was almost cover'd over with the muddy Substance, that had rested there in its Passage downwards.

THIS made a pretty deep Bog below, as a Gentleman who was with me, found from his Curiosity to try it, being deceived by the Surface, which was dry'd by the Sun and Wind ; for he forced

his Horse into it, and sunk, which surpriz'd my Companion, who I thought should have known better, being of *Ireland*.

I HAVE heretofore hinted the Danger of being shut in by Waters, and thereby debar'd from all Necessaries of Life, but have not yet mention'd the Extent of the Hills, that intervene between one Place of Shelter and another; and indeed it is impossible to do so in general. But those are sometimes nine or ten *Scots* Miles over, and one of them in particular, that I have pass'd, is Eighteen, wherein you frequently meet with Rivers and deep rugged Channels in the Sides of the Mountains, which you must pass, and these last are often the most dangerous of the two; and both, if continued Rains should fall, become impassable before you can attain the End; for which a great deal of Time is required by the Stonyness, and other Difficulties of the Way.

THERE

THERE is indeed one Alleviation : That as these Rivers may, from being shallow, become impracticable for the tallest Horse in two or three Hours Time, yet will they again be passable, from their Velocity, almost as soon, if the Rain entirely cease. When the Highlanders speak of these Spaces, they call 'em *Monts*, *without either House or Hall*; and never attempt to pass them, if the Tops of the Mountains presage bad Weather. Yet in that, they are sometimes deceived by a sudden Change of Wind.

ALL this Way you may go without seeing a Tree, or coming within two Miles of a Shrub; and when you come at last to a small Spot of arable Land, where the rocky Feet of the Hills serve for Enclosure, what Work do they make about the Beauties of the Place, as tho' one had never seen a Field of Oats before.



You know, that a polite Behaviour is common to the Army; but as it is impossible it should be universal, considering the different Tempers, and other Accidents that attend Mankind, so we have here a certain Captain, who is almost illiterate, perfectly rude, and thinks his Courage and Strength are sufficient Supports to his Incivilities.

THIS Officer finding a Laird at one of the publick Huts in the Highlands, and both going the same Way, they agreed to bear one another Company the rest of the Journey.

AFTER they had rid about four Miles, the Laird turn'd to him, and said — Now all the Ground we have hitherto gone over, is my own Property — By G —, says the other, I have an Apple-Tree in *Herefordshire*, that I would not swop with you for it all.

BUT to give you a better Idea of the Distance between one inhabited Spot, and

and another in a vast Extent of Country (Main and Island) I shall acquaint you with what a Chief was saying of his *Quondam* Estate.

He told me, that if he was re-instated, and dispos'd to sell it, I should have it for the Purchase-Money of Three-pence an Acre.

I DID not then take much Notice of what he said, it being at a Tavern in *Edinburgh*, and pretty late at Night ; but upon this Occasion of writing to you, I have made some Calculation of it, and find I should have been in Danger to have had a very hard Bargain. It is said to have been reduced by a Survey to a rectangle Parallelogram, or oblong Square of sixty Miles by forty ; which is 2400 square Miles, and 1,951,867 square Acres.

It is call'd 1500 *l.* a Year Rent ; but the Collector said, he never received 900 *l.*

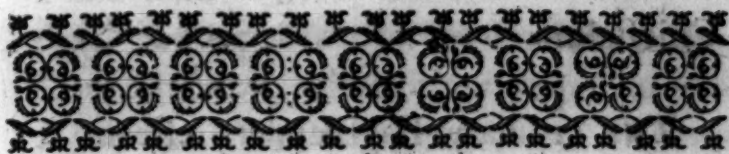
Now

Now the foregoing Number of Acres at 3 *d* an Acre, amounts to 24,398 *l.* 6 *s.* 9 *d.*—and 900 *per Annum*, at 25 Years Purchase, is but 22,500 *l.* The Difference is 1896 *l.* 6 *s.* 9 *d.*

THERE are other Observations that might not be improper ; but I shall now defer them, and continue my Account of the People, which has likewise been deferr'd in this Letter.



LETTER



## LETTER XIX.



THE Highlanders are divided into Tribes, or *Clans* under Chiefs, or *Chieftains*, as they are call'd in the Laws of *Scotland*; and each Clan again divided into Branches, from the main Stock, who have Chieftains over them. These are subdivided into smaller Branches of fifty or sixty Men, who deduce their Original from their particular Chieftains; and rely upon them as their more immediate Protectors and Defenders.

BUT for better Distinction, I shall use the Word *Chief* for the Head of a whole



whole Clan ; and the Principal of a Tribe deriv'd from him, I shall call a Chieftain.

THE ordinary Highlanders esteem it the most sublime Degree of Virtue to love their Chief, and pay him a blind Obedience, altho' it be in Opposition to the Government, the Laws of the Kingdom, or even to the Law of God. He is their Idol, and as they profess to know no King but him, (I was going farther) so will they say, they ought to do whatever he commands, without Enquiry.

NEXT to this Love of their Chief, is that of the particular Branch from whence they sprung, and in a third Degree, to those of the whole Clan or Name, whom they will assist, right or wrong, against those of any other Tribe, with which they are at Variance ; to whom their Enmity, like that of exasperated Brothers, is most outrageous.

THEY likewise owe good Will to such Clans as they esteem to be their particular

lar Well-wishers ; and lastly, they have an Adherence one to another as Highlanders, in Opposition to the People of the Low Country, whom they despise as inferior to them in Courage, and believe they have a Right to plunder them, whenever it is in their Power. This last arises from a Tradition, that the Lowlands in old Times were the Possession of their Ancestors.

If the Truth of this Opinion of theirs stood in Need of any Evidence, it might in good Measure be confirm'd, by what I had from a Highland Gentleman of my Acquaintance. He told me, that a certain Chief of a considerable Clan, in rummaging lately an old Charter Chest, found a Letter directed by another Chief to his Grandfather, who is therein assured of the immediate Restitution of his *Lifted*, that is, stolen Cows ; for that he (the Writer of the Letter) had thought they belong'd to the *Lowland* Lairds of *Murray*, whose Goods and Effects ought to be a Prey to them all.

WHEN

WHEN I mention'd this Tradition, I had only in View the middling and ordinary Highlanders, who are very tenacious of old Customs and Opinions ; and by the Example I have given of a Fact, that happen'd almost a Century ago, I would be understood, that it is very probable such a Notion was formerly entertain'd by some, at least among those of the highest Rank.

THE Chief exercises an arbitrary Authority over his Vassals, determines all Differences and Disputes that happen among them, and levies Taxes upon extraordinary Occasions ; such as the Marriage of a Daughter, building a House, or some Pretence for his Support, and the Honour of the *Name*. And if any one should refuse to contribute to the best of his Ability, he is sure of severe Treatment ; and if he persisted in his Obstinacy, he would be cast out of the Tribe by general Consent. But Instances

ces of this Kind have very rarely happen'd.

THIS Power of the Chiefs is not supported by Interest, as they are Landlords, but as lineally descended from the old Patriarchs, or Fathers of the Families; for they hold the same Authority, when they have lost their Estates, as may appear from several, and particularly one, who commands in his Clan, tho' at the same Time they maintain him, having nothing left of his own.

ON the other Hand, the Chief, even against the Laws, is to protect his Followers, as they are sometimes call'd; be they never so criminal.

HE is their Leader in Clan-Quarrels, must free the Necessitous from their Arrears of Rent; and maintain such, who by Accidents are fallen to total Decay.

IF by Increase of the Tribe any small Farms are wanting for the Support of such Addition, he splits others into lesser Portions,



Portions; because all must be somehow provided for. And as the meanest among 'em pretend to be his Relations by Consanguinity, they insist upon the Privilege of taking him by the Hand, wherever they meet him.

CONCERNING this last, I once saw a Number of very discontented Countenances, when a certain Lord, one of the Chiefs, endeavour'd to evade this Ceremony.

It was in Presence of an *English* Gentleman in high Station, from whom he would willingly have conceal'd the Knowledge of such seeming Familiarity with Slaves of so wretched Appearance; and thinking it, I suppose, as a Kind of Contradiction to what he had often boasted at other Times, *viz.* his despotick Power in his Clan.

THE unlimited Love and Obedience of the Highlanders to their Chiefs, are not confin'd to the lower Order of their Followers;

Followers ; but are the same with those who are near them in Rank.

As for Instance : As I was travelling in a very wild Part of the Country, and approaching the House of one of those Gentlemen who had Notice of my coming, he met me at some Distance from his Dwelling ; with his *Arcadian* Offering of Milk and Cream, as usual, carried before him by his Servants. He afterwards invited me to his Hut, which was built like the others, only very long, but without any Partition ; where the Family was at one End, and some Cattle at the other. By the Way, altho' the Weather was not warm, he was without Shoes, Stockings, or Breeches, in a short Coat, with a Shirt not much longer, which hung between his Thighs ; and just hid his Nakedness from two Daughters about seventeen or eighteen Years old, who sat over against him. After some Compliments on either Side, and his wishing me good *Weather*, we enter'd into Conversation, in which he

seem'd to be a Man of good Sense, as he was well proportion'd. In speaking of the Country, he told me he knew I wonder'd how any Body would undergo the Inconveniencies of a Highland Life.

You may be sure I was not wanting in an agreeable Contradiction, by saying, I doubted not they had their Satisfaction and Pleasures to countervail any Inconveniencies they might sustain; tho' perhaps those Advantages could not be well known to such as are *en passant*. But he very modestly interrupted me as I was going on, and said, he knew that what I said, was the Effect of Complaisance, and could not be the real Sentiment of one who knew a good deal of the Country; but, says he, the Truth is, we are insensibly inur'd to it by Degrees. For, when very young, we know no better; being grown up, we are inclin'd, or perswaded by our near Relations to marry, thence comes Children, and Fondness for them. But above all, says he, is the *Love of our Chief*, so strongly is it inculcated

cated to us in our Infancy. And if it were not for that, I think the Highlands would be much thinner of People than they now are. By this and many other Instances, I am fully persuaded, that the Highlanders are, at least, as fond of the Race of their Chiefs, as a *Frenchman* is of the House of *Bourbon*.

SEVERAL Reasons have just now offer'd themselves to me, in Persuasion to conceal one Circumstance of this Visit; but your Interest with me has prevail'd against them all.

THE two young Ladies, in my saluting them at parting, did me a Favour, which, with you would be thought the utmost Invitation; but it is purely innocent with them, and a Mark of the highest Esteem for their Guest.

THIS was no great Surprize to me, having received the same Compliment several Times before in the Highlands, and even from married Women,



whom I may be sure had no further Design in it; and like the two above-mention'd young Women, could never expect to see me again.

BUT I am not singular; for several Officers in the Army have told me they had received the same Courtesy from other Females in the Hills.

SOME of the Chiefs have not only personal Dislikes and Enmity to each other, but there are also hereditary Feuds between Clan and Clan; which have been handed down from one Generation to another, for several Ages.

THESE Quarrels descend to the meanest Vassal; and thus, sometimes, an innocent Person suffers for Crimes committed by his Tribe at a vast Distance of Time, before his *Being* began.

WHEN a Quarrel begins in Words, between two Highlanders of different Clans, it is esteem'd the very Height of Malice

Malice and Rancour; and the greatest of all Provocations to reproach one another with the Vices or personal Defects of their Chief, which for the most Part ends in Wounds or Death.

OFTEN the Monuments of a Clan Battle, or some particular Murder, are the Incitements to great Mischiefs. The first mention'd are small Heaps of Stones thrown together on the Place, where every particular Man fell in Battle; the other is from such a Heap first cast upon the Spot where the Fact was committed, and afterwards by Degrees increas'd to a high Pyramid, by those of the Clan that was wrong'd, in still throwing more Stones, upon it as they pass by. The former I have seen overgrown with Moss, upon wide Moors, which shew'd the Number of Men that were kill'd in the Action. And several of the latter I have observ'd in my Journeys, that could not be less than fourteen or fifteen Feet high, with a Base proportionable.

Thus, if several Men of Clans at Variance happen to meet in View of one of these Memorials, 'tis odds but one Party reproaches the other with all the aggravating Circumstances that Tradition (which is mostly a Liar, either in the whole or a Part) has added to the original Truth; and then some great Mischief ensues.

BUT if a single Highlander of the Clan that offended, should be met by two or three more of the others, he is sure to be insulted, and receive some cruel Treatment from them.

Thus these Heaps of Stones, as I have heard an old Highlander complain, continue to occasion the Revival of Animosities, that had their Beginning perhaps hundreds of Years before any of the Parties accused were born; and therefore I think they ought, by Authority, to be scattered, and effectually defaced. But some of these Monuments have

have been raised, in Memory of such as have lost their Lives in a Journey by Snow, Rivers, or other Accidents; as was the Practice of the eastern Nations.

By an old *Scottish* Law, the Chief was made accountable for any Depredations, or other Violences committed by his Clan upon the Borders of the Lowlands; and in extraordinary Cases he was obliged to give up his Son, or some other nearest Relation as a Hostage, for the peaceable Behaviour of his Followers in that Respect.

By this Law (for I never saw the Act) he must surely have had an entire Command over them; at least, tacitly, or by Inference understood. For how unreasonable, not to say, unjust, must such a Restriction have been to him, if by Sanction of the same Law he had not had a coercive and judicial Authority over those, in whose Choice and Power it always lay to bring Punishment upon him? And if he had such an absolute



Command over them, was it not to make of every Chief a petty Prince in his own Territory, and his Followers a People distinct and separate from all others?

FOR atrocious Crimes, such as Rebellion, Murder, Rapes, or opposing the Execution of the Laws, which is also call'd Rebellion, when by Process the Chief or Laird was condemn'd in Absence, and *intercommun'd*, as they call it, or outlaw'd, the Civil Power, by Law and Custom gave Letters of *Fire and Sword* against him; and the Officer of Justice might call for military Force, to assist in the Execution.

BUT it is certain, some few of the Chiefs in former Times were upon Occasions, too powerful to be brought to Account by the Government.

I HAVE heard many Instances of the Faithfulness of particular Highlanders to

to their Masters, but shall relate only one; which is to me very well known.

AT the Battle of *Glenshiels*, in the Rebellion of the Year 1719, a Gentleman, (*George Munro of Culcairne*) for whom I have a great Esteem, commanded a Company of Highland Men, rais'd out of his Father's Clan; and entertain'd at his own Expence. There he was dangerously wounded in the Thigh from a Party of the Rebel Highlanders, posted upon the Declivity of a Mountain; who kept on firing at him, after he was down, according to their Want of Discipline, in spending much Fire upon one single Officer, which distributed among the Body, might thin the Ranks of their Enemy.

WHEN, after he fell, and found by their Behaviour, they were resolv'd to dispatch him outright, he bid his Servant, who was by, get out of the Danger, for he might lose his Life, but could be of no Manner of Succour or Service

Service to him; and only desired him, that when he return'd Home, he would let his Father and his Family know that he had not misbehav'd.

HEREUPON the Highlander burst out into Tears, and asking him how he thought he could leave him in that Condition, and what they would think of him at Home, set himself down on his Hands and Knees over his Master, and received several Wounds, to shield him from further Hurt; 'till one of the Clan, who acted as a Serjeant, with a small Party dislodg'd the Enemy, after having taken an Oath upon his *Dirk*, that he would do it.

For my own Part, I do not see how this Act of Fidelity is any Way inferior to the so celebrated one of *Philocratus*, Slave to *Caius Gracchus*; who likewise cover'd his Master with his Body, when he was found by his Enemies in a Wood, in such Manner, that *Caius* could not be  
kill'd

kill'd by them, 'till they had first dispatch'd his Domestick.

THIS Man has often waited at Table, when his Master and I din'd together; but otherwise is treated more like a Friend, than a Servant.

THE Highlanders, in order to persuade a Belief of their Hardiness, have several Rodomontados on that Head; for, as the *French* Proverb says, *Tous les Gascons, ne sont pas en France*: There are vain Boasters in other Countries, besides *Gascony*. 'Tis true, they are liable to great Hardships, and they often suffer by 'em in their Health and Limbs, as I have often observ'd in a former Letter.

ONE of these Gasconades is, that the Laird of *Keppoch*, Chieftain of a Branch of the *Mac'Donalds*, in a Winter Campaign against a neighbouring Laird, with whom he was at War about a Possession, gave Orders for rowling a Snow-ball to lay under his Head in the Night; whereupon his Followers murmur'd, saying,

Now



*Now we despair of Victory, since our Leader is become so effeminate, he can't sleep without a Pillow.*

THIS, and many other like Stories are romantick ; but there is one Thing, that at first Thought might seem very extraordinary, of which I have been credibly assured, that when the Highlanders are constrain'd to lie among the Hills, in cold dry windy Weather, they sometimes soak the Plaid in some River or Burne ; and then holding up a Corner of it a little above their Heads, they turn themselves round and round, 'till they are envelop'd by the whole Mantle. Then they lay themselves down on the Heath, upon the Leeward Side of some Hill, where the wet and the warmth of their Bodies make a Steam, like that of a boiling Kettle. The wet, they say, keeps 'em warm by thick'ning the Stuff, and keeping the Wind from penetrating.

I MUST confess I should myself have been apt to question this Fact, had I  
not

not frequently seen them wet from Morning to Night; and even at the Beginning of the Rain, not so much as stir a few Yards to shelter, but continue in it without Necessity, 'till they were, as we say, wet through and through. And that is soon effected by the Looseness and Spunginess of the Plaiding; but the Bonnet is frequently taken off, and wrung like a Dish-Clout, and then put on again.

THEY have been accustom'd from their Infancy to be often wet, and to take the Water-like Spaniels; and this is become a second Nature, and can scarcely be call'd a Hardship to them, insomuch that I used to say, they seem'd to be of the Duck Kind, and to love the Water as well. Tho' I never saw this Preparation for Sleep in windy Weather, yet setting out early in a Morning from one of the Huts, I have seen the Marks of their Lodging, where the Ground has been free from Rime or Snow, which remain'd

remain'd all round the Spots where they had lain.

The different Sur-names of the Highlanders in general are but few, in regard they are divided into large Families, and hardly any Male Strangers have intermarried with, or settled among 'em; and with respect to particular Tribes, they commonly make that Alliance among themselves, who are all of one Name, except some few who may have affected to annex themselves to the Clan, and those for the most Part assume the Name.

Thus the Sur-names being useless, for Distinction of Persons are suppress'd, and there remain only the Christian Names; of which there are every where a great Number of *Duncans*, *Donalds*, *Alexanders*, *Patricks*, &c. who therefore must be some otherways distinguish'd one from another.

THIS

## L E T T E R   X I X. 111

THIS is done by some additional Names and Descriptions taken from their Forefathers; for when their own Christian Name, with their Father's Name and Description (which is for the most Part the Colour of the Hair) is not sufficient, they add the Grandfather's, and so upwards, till they are perfectly distinguished from all others of the same Clan-Name.

As for Example; A Man whose Name is *Donald Grant*, has for Patronimick (as they call it) the Name following, viz.

*Donald Bane*, i. e. White hair'd *Donald*.

*Mac oil Vane*, Son of grey hair'd *Donald*.

*Vic oil roi*, Grandson of red hair'd *Donald*.

*Vic ean*, Great Grandson of *John*.

THUS, you see the Name of *Grant* is not used, because all of that Clan are either so called, or assume that Name.

ANOTHER Thing is; that if this Man had descended in a direct Line, as eldest,  
from



from *John*, the remotest Ancestor, and *John* had been a Chief; he would only be called *Mac Ean*, leaving out all the intermediate Successions by way of Eminence.

THESE patronimical Names, at length, are made use of, chiefly, in Writings, Receipts, Rentals, &c. and in ordinary Matters the Highlanders have, sometimes, other Distinctions, which also to some are pretty long.

WHEN Numbers of them, composed from different Tribes, have been jointly employed in a Work, they have had arbitrary and temporary Denominations added to their Christian Names by their Overseers for the more ready Distinction; such as, the Place they came from; the Person who recommended them, some particular Vice, or from something remarkable in their Persons, &c. by which fictitious Names they have also been set down in the Books of their Employers.

It

It is a received Notion (but nothing can be more unjust) that the ordinary Highlanders are an indolent lazy People; I know the Contrary by troublesome Experience; I say troublesome, because, in a certain Affair wherein I had Occasion to employ great Numbers of them, and gave them good Wages, the Solicitations of others for Employment were very earnest, and would hardly admit of a Denial; they are as willing as other People to mend their Way of Living, and when they have gained Strength from substantial Food, they work as well as others; but why should a People be branded with the Name of Idles in a Country where there is generally no profitable Business for them to do?

HENCE I have concluded, That if any Expedient could be found for their Employment, to their reasonable Advantage, there would be little else wanting to reform the Minds of the most savage amongst them. For my own Part, I do

assure you, that I never had the least Reason to complain of the Behaviour towards me of any of the ordinary Highlanders, or the *Irish*; but it wants a great deal that I could truly say as much of the *Englishmen* and lowland *Scots* that were employed in the same Business.

ONE of the Chiefs, at his own House, complained to me (but in a friendly Manner) as though I had seduced some of his Subjects from their Allegiance. He had Occasion for three or four of those of his Clan (whom I employed) about a Piece of Work at home, which they only could do, and when he was about to pay them for their Labour, he offered them Six-pence a Day each (being great Wages, even if they had not been his Vassals) in Consideration he had taken them from other Employment; upon which they remonstrated, and said, he injured them in calling them from Sixteen-pence a Day to Six-pence; and I very well remember, he then told me, that if any of those People had, formerly,

## L E T T E R XIX. 115

formerly, said as much to their Chief, they would have been carried to the next Rock and precipitated.

THE Highlanders walk nimbly and upright, so that you will never see among the meanest of them, in the most remote Parts, the clumsy stooping Gait of the *French* Paisans, or our own Country Fellows; but on the contrary, a kind of Stateliness in the Midst of their Poverty; and this I think may be accounted for without much Difficulty.

THEY have a Pride in their Family, as almost every one is a Genealogist; they wear light Brogues, or Pumps, and are accustomed to skip over Rocks and Bogs; whereas, our Country-Labourers have no such Pride, wear heavy clouted Shoes, and are continually dragging their Feet out of ploughed Land or Clays; but those very Men, in a short Time after they are enlisted into the Army, erect their Bodies, change their clownish Gait, and become smart Fellows; and



indeed, the Soldiers in general, after being a little accustomed to the Toils and Difficulties of the Country can, and do, to my Knowledge, acquit themselves in their Winter-Marches, and other Hardships as well as the Highlanders; on the other hand it is observed, that the private Men of the independent Highland Companies are become less hardy than others from their great Pay (as it is to them) the best Lodging the Country affords, and warm Clothing.

I CANNOT forbear to tell you before I conclude, that many of those *private Gentlemen* have *Gillys*, or Servants to attend them in Quarters, and upon a March to carry their Provisions and Firelocks.

BUT as I have happened to touch upon those Companies, it may not be amiss to go a little farther, for I think I have just room enough for it in this Sheet.

THERE are six of them, *viz.* three of one hundred Men, and three of sixty each,

each, in all four hundred and eighty Men.

THESE are, chiefly, Tenants to the Captains; and one of the *Centurions* or Captains of an Hundred, is said to strip his other Tenants of their best *Plaids* wherewith to cloath his Soldiers against a Review, and to commit many other Abuses of his Trust.

THESE Captains are all of them vying with each other whose Company shall best perform the manual Exercise; so that four hundred and eighty Men, besides the Changes made among them, are sufficient to teach that Part of the military Discipline throughout the whole Highlands.

I AM not a Prophet, nor the Son of a Prophet, or even *second-sighted*; yet I foresee that a Time may come when the Institution of these *Corps* may be thought not to have been the best of Policy. I am not unawares, it may be said; they were

raised in order to facilitate the *Disarming*,  
and they are useful to prevent the Stealing  
of Cattle; but both those Reasons are  
not sufficient to alter my Opinion of their  
Continuance,



LETTER



## LETTER XX.



THE Gentry may be said to be a handsome People, but the Commonalty much otherwise ; one would hardly think, by their Faces, they were of the same Species, at least, of the same Country, which plainly proceeds from their bad Food, Smoak at home, and Sun, Wind and Rain abroad, because the young Children have as good Features as any I have seen in other Parts of the Island.

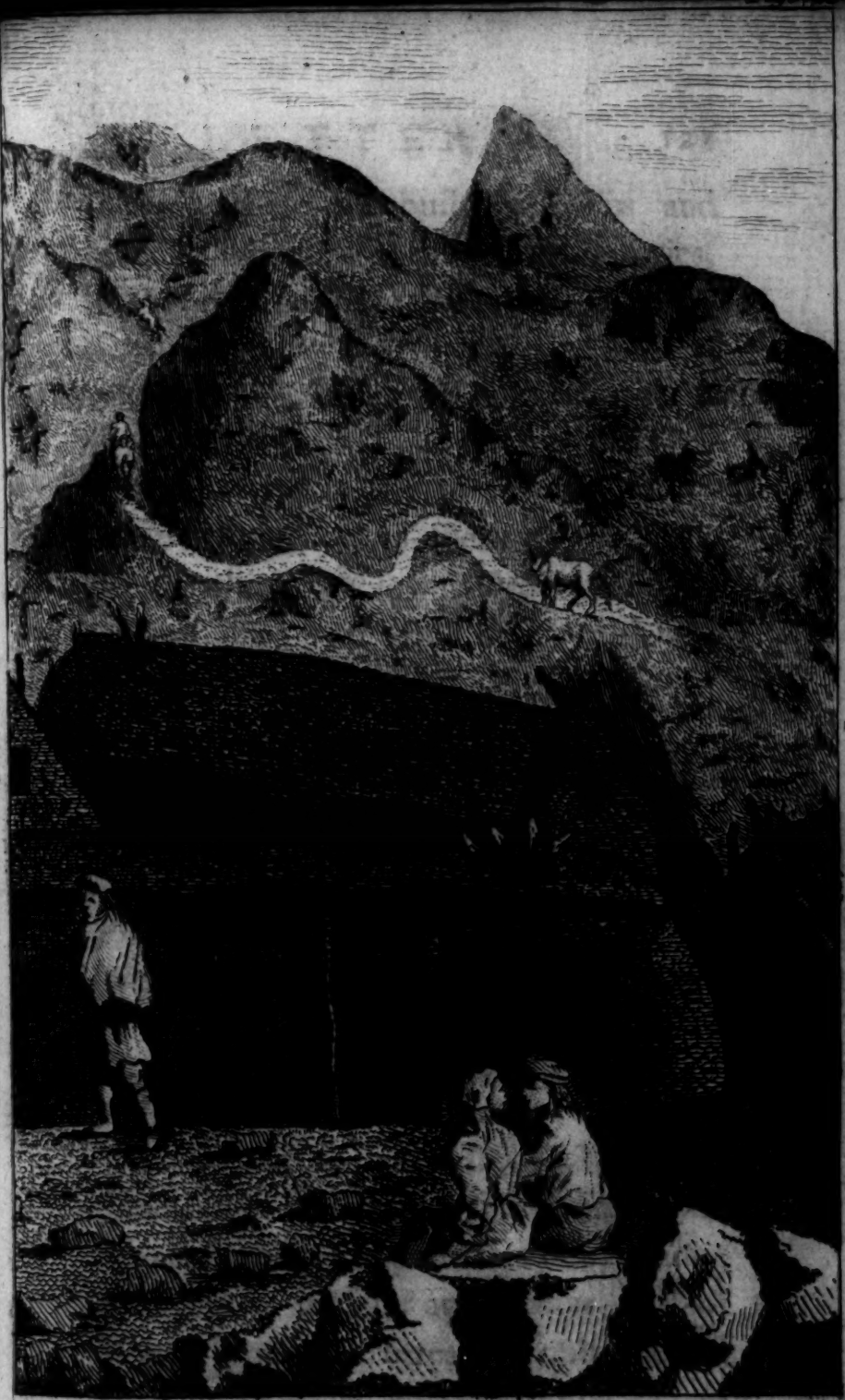
I HAVE mentioned the Sun in this northern Climate as partly the Cause of



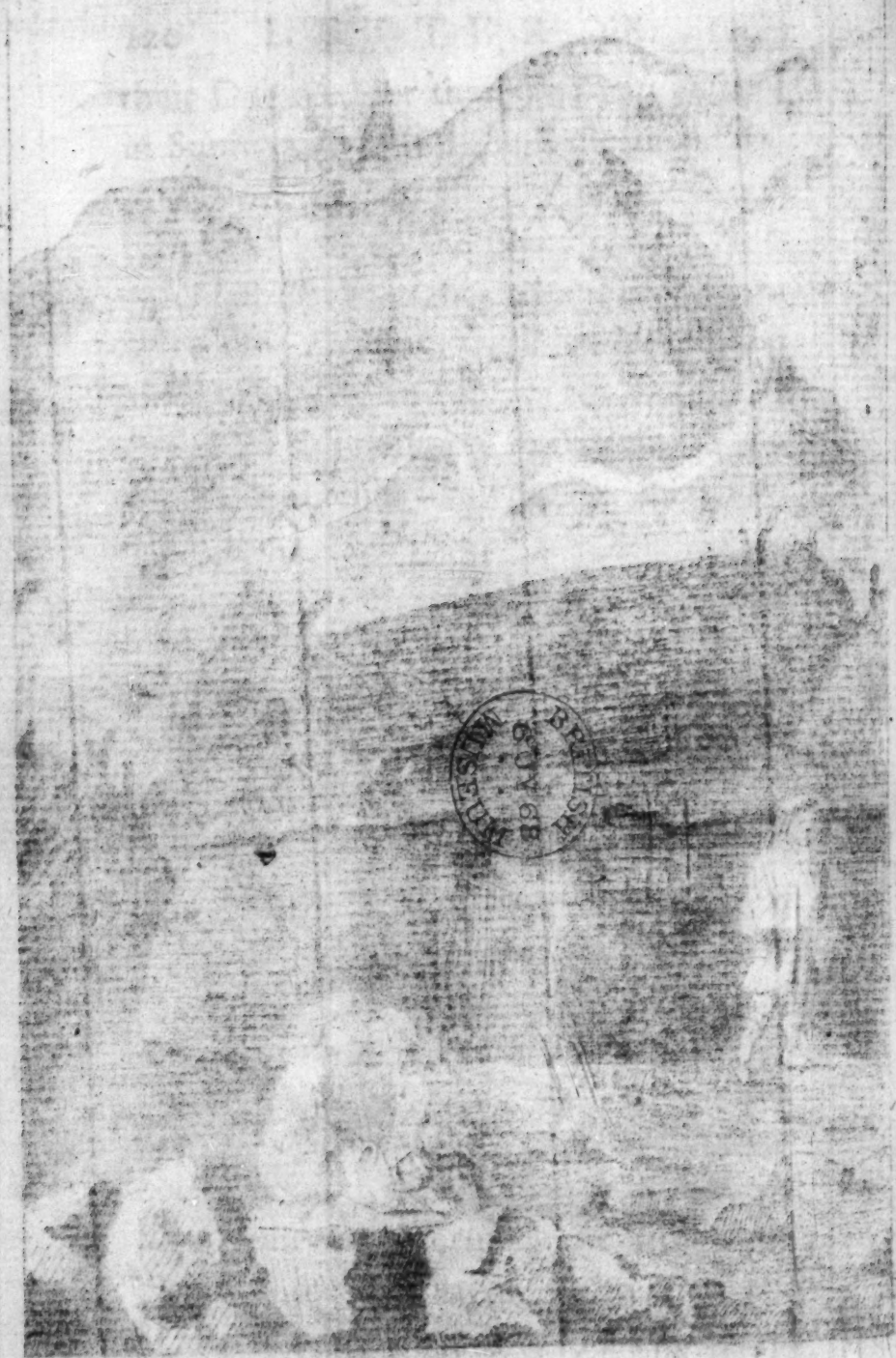
their Disguise, for that (as I said before) in Summer the Heat, by Reflection from the Rocks, is excessive; at the same time the Cold on the Tops of the Hills is so vast an Extreme as cannot be conceived by any but those who have felt the Difference, and know the Danger of so sudden a Transition from one to the other; and this likewise has its Effect upon them.

THE ordinary Natives are, for the most part, civil when they are kindly used, but most mischievous when much offended, and will hardly ever forgive a Provocation, but seek some open or secret Revenge, and generally speaking, the latter of the two.

A HIGHLAND TOWN, as before mentioned, is composed of a few Huts for Dwellings, with Barns and Stables, and both the latter are of a more diminutive Size than the former, all irregularly placed, some one way, some another, and at any Distance look like so many Heaps  
of



*T. Jefferys sculp*



of Dirt; these are built in Glens and Straths, which are the Corn Countries, near Rivers and Rivulets, and also on the Sides of Lakes where there is some arable Land for the Support of the Inhabitants.

BUT I am now to speak of the Manner in which the lower Order of Highlanders live; and shall begin with the Spring of the Year.

THIS is a bad Season with them, for then their Provision of Oatmeal begins to fail, and for a Supply they bleed their Cattle and boil the Blood into Cakes, which, together with a little Milk and a short Allowance of Oatmeal is their Food.

IT is true, there are small Trouts, or something like them, in some of the little Rivers, which continue in Holes among the Rocks, which are always full of Water when the Stream is quite ceased for want of Rain; these might be a Help  
to



to them in this starving Season, but I have had so little Notion in all my Journeys that they made those Fish a Part of their Diet, that I never once thought of them, as such, till this very Moment. It is likely they can't catch them for want of proper Tackle, but I am sure they cannot be without them for want of Leisure. What may seem strange is ; that they do not introduce Roots among them (as Potatoes, for the Purpose) but the Land they occupy is so very little, they think they cannot spare any Part of it from their Corn, and the Landlord's Demand of Rent in *Kind* is another Objection. You will perceive I am speaking only of the poor People in the interior Parts of the Mountains, for near the Coast, all round them, there are few confined to such diminutive Farms, and the most necessitous of all may share, upon Occasion, the Benefit of various Kinds of Shell-fish, only for seeking and fetching.

THEIR

THEIR Cattle are much weakened by want of sufficient Food in the preceding Winter, and this immoderate Bleeding reduces them to so low a Plight, that in a Morning they cannot rise from the Ground, and several of the Inhabitants join together to help up each others Cows, &c.

IN Summer the People remove to the Hills and dwell in much worse Huts than those they leave below; these are near the Spots of Grazing, and are called *Shealings*, scattered from one another as Occasion requires. Every one has his particular Space of Pasture, for which, if it be not a Part of his Farm; he pays, as I shall mention hereafter.

HERE they make their Butter and Cheese; by the way, I have seen some of the former with bluish Veins made, as I thought, by the Mixture of Smoke, not much unlike to *Castile* Soap, but some have said it was a Mixture of  
Sheep's

Sheep's Milk which gave a Part of it that Tincture of Blue.

When the Grazing fails the Highlanders return to their former Habitations, and the Cattle to pick up their Sustenance among the Heath, as before.

At other Times the Children share the Milk with the Calves, Lambs and Kids, for they milk the Dams of them all, which keeps their Young so lean, that when sold in the low Country they are chiefly used, as they tell me, to make *Soups* withal; and when a Side of any one of these Kinds hangs up in our Market, the least disagreeable Part of the Sight is the Transparency of the Ribs.

ABOUT the latter End of *August*, or Beginning of *September*, the Cattle are brought into good Order by their Summer Feed, and the Beef is extremely sweet and succulent, which I suppose is owing, in good part, to their being reduced

duced to such Poverty in the Spring and made up again with new Flesh.

Now the Drovers collect their Herds and drive them to Fairs and Markets on the Borders of the Lowlands, and sometimes to the North of *England*, and, in their Passage, they pay a certain Tribute, proportionable to the Number of Cattle, to the Owner of the Territory they pass through, which is in lieu of all Reckonings for Grazing.

I HAVE several times seen them driving great Numbers of Cattle along the Sides of the Mountains at a great Distance, but never, except once, was near them. This was in a Time of Rain. by a wide River where there was a Boat to ferry over the Drovers. The Cows were about fifty in Number, and took the Water like Spaniels, and when they were in, their Drivers made a hideous Cry to urge them forwards; this, they told me, they did to keep the Foremost of them from turning about; for in that Case the rest  
would



would do the like, and then they would be in Danger, especially the weakest of them, to be driven away, and drown'd by the Torrent.

I THOUGHT it a very odd Sight to see so many Noses and Eyes just above Water, and nothing of them more to be seen; for they had no Horns, and upon the Land they appear'd in Size and Shape, like so many large *Lincolnshire* Calves.

I SHALL speak of the Highland Harvest, that is, the Autumn, when I come to the Article of their Husbandry. But nothing is more deplorable, than the State of these People in Time of Winter.

THEY are in that Season often confin'd to their Glens, by swollen Rivers, Snow, or Ice on the Paths, in the Sides of the Hills, which is accumulated by Drippings from the Springs above, and so by little and little form'd into Knobs, like a Stick of Sugar-candy; only the

Parts are not angular like those, but so uneven and slippery, no Foot can pass.

THEY have no Diversions to amuse 'em, but sit brooding in the Smoke, over the Fire, 'till their Legs and Thighs are scorched to an extraordinary Degree; and many have sore Eyes, and some are quite blind.

THIS long Continuance in the Smoke makes 'em almost as black as Chimney-Sweepers; and when the Huts are not Water-tight, which is often the Case, the Rain that comes through the Roof, and mixes with the Sootiness of the Inside, where all the Sticks look like Charcoal, falls in Drops like Ink. But, in this Circumstance, the Highlanders are not very solicitous about their outward Appearance.

To supply the Want of Candles, when they have Occasion for more Light than is given by the Fire, they provide themselves with a Quantity of Sticks of Fir,  
the

the most resinous that can be procured ; some of these are lighted and laid upon a Stone, and as the Light decays, they revive it with fresh Fewel. But when they happen to be destitute of Fire, and none is to be got in the Neighbourhood, they produce it by rubbing Sticks together ; but I don't recollect what Kind of Wood is fittest for that Purpose.

IF a Drift of Snow from the Mountains happens, and the same should be of any Continuance, they are thereby render'd compleatly Prisoners. In this Case the Snow being whirled from the Mountains and Hills, lodges in the Plains below, 'till sometimes it increases to a Height almost equal with the Tops of their Huts ; but then it is soon dissolv'd for a little Space round 'em, which is caus'd by the Warmth of the Fire, Smoke, Family and Cattle within.

THUS are they confin'd to a very narrow Compass, and in the mean Time, if they have any out-lying Cattle in the Hills,

Hills, they are leaving the Heights, and returning Home ; for by the same Means that the Snow is accumulated in the *Glen*, the Hills are clear'd of the Incumbrance : But the Cattle are sometimes intercepted by the Depth of Snow, in the Plain or deep Hollows in their Way. In such Case, when the Wind's Drift begins to cease from the Winds having a little spent its Fury, the People take the following Method to open a Communication.

If the Huts are at any Distance asunder, one of them begins at the Edge of the Snow next to his Dwelling, and waving his Body from Side to Side, presses forward, and squeezes it from him on either Hand ; and if it be higher than his Head, he breaks down that Part with his Hands. Thus he proceeds, 'till he comes to another Hut, and when some of them are got together, they go on in the same Manner to open a Way for the Cattle ; and in thus doing they relieve one another, when too wet and



weary to proceed further, 'till the whole is compleated. Yet notwithstanding all their Endeavours, their Cattle are sometimes lost.

As this may seem to you a little too extraordinary, and you will believe I never saw it, I shall assure you I had it from a Gentleman, who being nearly related to a Chief, has therefore a considerable Farm in the inner Highlands, and would not deceive me in a Fact, that does not recommend his Country; of which he is as jealous as any one I have known on this Side the *Tweed*.

A DRIFT of Snow, like that above described, was said to have been the Ruin of the *Swedish* Army, in the last Expedition of *Charles* the Twelfth.

BEFORE I proceed to their Husbandry, I shall give you some Account of an Animal necessary to it; that is, their Horses, or rather (as they are call'd) Garrons.

THESE

THESE Horses, in Miniature, run wild among the Mountains; some of them, 'till they are eight or ten Years old, which renders them exceedingly restive and stubborn.

THERE be various Ways of catching them, according to the Nature of the Spot of Country, where they chiefly keep their Haunts. Sometimes they are hunted by Numbers of Highland Men into a Bog, in other Places they are driven up a steep Hill, where the nearest of the Pursuers endeavours to catch them by the hind Leg; and I have been told, that sometimes both Horse and Man have come tumbling down together.

IN another Place they have been hunted from one to another, among the Heath and Rocks, 'till they have laid themselves down through Weariness and want of Breath.

THEY are so small, that a middle-siz'd Man must keep his Legs almost

in Lines parallel to their Sides, when carry'd over the stony Ways; and it is almost incredible to those who have not seen it, how nimbly they skip with a heavy Rider among the Rocks, and large Moor-Stones, turning *Zic Zac* to such Places as are passable.

I THINK verily they all follow one another in the same irregular Steps, because in those Ways there appears some little Smoothness, worn by their naked Hoofs, which is not any where else to be seen.

WHEN I have been riding (or rather creeping) along at the Foot of a Mountain, I have discover'd them by their Colour, which is mostly white, and by their Motion, which readily catches the Eye; when at the same Time they were so high above me, they seem'd to be no bigger than a Lap-dog, and almost hanging over my Head. But what has appear'd to me very extraordinary, is, that when, at other Times, I have pass'd near to 'em, I have perceiv'd 'em to be  
(like

(like some of our common Beggars in *London*) in ragged and tatter'd Coats, but full in Flesh; and that, even toward the latter End of Winter, when I think they could have nothing to feed upon, but Heath and rotten Leaves of Trees, if any of the latter were to be found.

THE Highlanders have a Tradition they came originally from *Spain*, by Breeders left there by the *Spaniards* in former Times; and they say, they have been a great Number of Years in dwindling to their present diminutive Size.

I WAS one Day greatly diverted with the Method of taming these wild Hobbies.

IN passing along a narrow Path on the Side of a high Hill among the Mountains, at length it brought me to a Part looking down into a little Plain; there I was at once presented with the Scene of a Highland Man beating one of these Garrons most unmercifully with a great



Stick, and upon a stricter View I perceiv'd the Man had tied a Rope, or something like it, about one of his hind Legs, as you may have seen a single Hog driven in *England*; and indeed in my Situation he did not seem so big. At the same Time the Horse was kicking and violently struggling, and sometimes the Garron was down, and sometimes the Highlander, and not seldom both of them together, but still the Man kept his Hold.

AFTER waiting a considerable Time to see the Event, tho' not so well pleased with the Precipice I stood upon, I found the Garron gave it up; and being perfectly conquer'd for that Time, patiently suffer'd himself to be driven to a Hut not far from the Field of Battle.

I WAS desirous to ask the Highlander a Question or two, by the Help of my Guide, but there was no Means for me to get down but by *falling*; and when I came to a Part of the Hill, where I could descend to the Glen, I had but little Inclination to go back again, for  
I never

I never by Choice made one Retrograde Step, when I was leaving the Mountains. But what is pretty strange, tho' very true (by what Charm I know not) I have been well enough pleas'd to see them again, at my first Entrance to them in my Returns from *England*. And this has made my Wonder cease, that a Native should be so fond of such a Country.

THE Soil of the Corn Lands is in some Places so shallow with rocky Ground beneath it, that a Plough is of no Manner of Use. This they dig up with a wooden Spade; for almost all their Implements for Husbandry, which in other Countries are made of Iron, or partly of that Metal, are in some Parts of the Highlands entirely made of Wood; such as the *Spade*, *Plough-share*, *Harrow*, *Harness*, and *Bolts*, and even *Locks* for Doors are made of Wood. By the Way, these Locks are contriv'd so artfully, by Notches made at unequal Distances withinside, that it is impossible to open them with any Thing but the wooden Keys that belong to them. But there would be no great

Difficulty in opening the Wall of the Hut, as the Highlander did by the Portmanteau that he saw lying upon a Table; and nobody near it but his Companion.

OUT! says he; what Fool was this that put a Lock upon Leather? and immediately ripp'd it open with his Dirk.

WHERE the Soil is deeper, they plough with four of their little Horses abreast; the Manner this:

BEING thus rank'd, they are divided by a small Space into Pairs, and the Driver, or rather Leader of the Plough, having placed himself before them, holding the two innermost by their Heads, to keep the Couples asunder; he with his Face toward the Plough, goes backward, observing, through the Space between the Horses, the Way of the Plough-share.

WHEN I first saw this aukward Method, as I then thought it, I rid up to the

the Person who guided the Machine, to ask him some Questions concerning it: He spoke pretty good *English*, which made me conclude he was a Gentleman; and yet in Quality of a Proprietor and Conductor might, without Dishonour, employ himself in such a Work.

My first Question was, whether that Method was common to the Highlands, or peculiar to that Part of the Country; and by Way of Answer, he ask'd me, if they plough'd otherwise any where else. Upon my further Enquiry, why the Man went backwards, he stopp'd, and very civilly inform'd me, that there were several small Rocks, which I did not see, that had a little Part of them just peeping on the Surface, and therefore it was necessary his Servant should see and avoid 'em, by guiding the Horses accordingly; or otherwise his Plough might be spoil'd by the Shock.

THE Answer was satisfactory and convincing; and I must here take Notice,  
that



that many other of their Methods are too well suited to their own Circumstances, and those of the Country, to be easily amended by such as undertake to deride them.

IN the Western Highlands they still retain that barbarous Custom (which I have not seen any where else) of drawing the Harrow by the Horse's Dock, without any Manner of Harness whatever. And when the Tail becomes too short for the Purpose, they lengthen it out with twisted Sticks. This unnatural Practice was formerly forbidden in *Ireland* by Act of Parliament, as my Memory informs me, from Accounts I have formerly read of that Country; for being almost without Books, I can have little other Help wherefrom to make Quotations.

WHEN a Burden is to be carry'd on Horseback, they use two Baskets, call'd *Creels*, one on each Side of the Horse; and if the Load be such as can't be divided

vided, they put it into one of them, and counterbalance it with Stones in the other, so that one Half of the Horse's Burden is ——— I can't say unnecessary, because I don't see how they could well do otherwise in the Mountains.

THEIR Harvest is late in the Year, and therefore seldom got in dry, as the great Rains usually come on about the latter End of *August*, nor is the Corn well preserv'd afterwards in those miserable Hovels they call Barns, which are mostly not fit to keep out the bad Weather from above; and were it not for the high Winds that pass through the Openings of the Sides in dry Weather, it would, of Necessity, be quite spoil'd. But as it is, the Grain is often grown in the Sheaves, as I have observ'd in a former Letter.

To the Lightness of the Oats, one might think they contributed themselves, for if there be one Part of their Ground that produces worse Grain than another, they

they reserve that, or Part of it for Seed; believing it will produce again as well in Quantity and Quality as the best, but whether in this they are right or wrong, I can't determine.

ANOTHER Thing, besides the bad Weather that retards their Harvest, is; they make it chiefly the Work of the Women of the Family. Near the Lowlands I have known a Field of Corn to employ a Woman and a Girl for a Fortnight; which, with proper Help, might have been done in two Days. And altho' the Owner might not well afford to employ many Hands, yet his own Labour would have prevented half the Risque of bad Weather at that uncertain Season.

AN *English* Lady, who found herself something decaying in her Health, and was advis'd to go among the Hills, and drink Goat's Milk or Whey, told me lately, that seeing a Highlander basking at the Foot of a Hill in his full Dress, while his Wife and her Mother were hard  
at

at work in reaping the Oats; she ask'd the old Woman how she could be contented to see her Daughter labour in that Manner, while her Husband was only an idle Spectator? And to this the Woman answered, that her Son-in-Law was a *Gentleman*, and it would be a disparagement to him to do any such Work; and that both she and her Daughter too were sufficiently honour'd by the Alliance.

THIS Instance I own has something particular in it, as such, but the Thing is very common, *à la Palatine*, among the middling Sort of People.

Not long ago, a *French* Officer, who was coming hither the Hill Way, to raise some Recruits for the *Dutch* Service, met a Highland Man with a good Pair of Brogues on his Feet; and his Wife marching bare-foot after him.

THIS Indignity to the Sex rais'd the *Frenchman's* Anger to such a Degree, that



that he leap'd from his Horse, and oblig'd the Fellow to take off the Shoes, and the Woman to put them on.

By this last Instance (not to trouble you with others) you may see it is not in their Harvest-work alone ; they are something in the *Palatine* Way, with Respect to their Women.

THE Highlanders have a Notion that the Moon, in a clear Night, ripens their Corn much more than a Sun-shiny Day ; for this they plead Experience, yet they can't say by what Rule they make the Comparison. But by this Opinion of theirs, I think they have little Knowledge of the Nature of those two Planets.

IN larger Farms, belonging to Gentlemen of the Clan, where there are any Number of Women employ'd in Harvest-Work, they all keep Time together, by several barbarous Tones of the Voice ; and stoop and rise together, as regularly as a Rank of Soldiers, when they

they ground their Arms. Sometimes they are incited to their Work by the Sound of a Bagpipe ; and by either of these, they proceed with great Alacrity, it being disgraceful for any one to be out of Time with the Sickle. They use the same Tone, or a Piper, when they thicken the new woven Plaiding, instead of a Fulling-Mill.

THIS is done by six or eight Women sitting upon the Ground, near some River or Rivulet, in two opposite Ranks, with the wet Cloth between them ; their Coats are tuck'd up, and with their naked Feet they strike one against another, keeping exact Time as abovemention'd. And among Numbers of Men, employ'd in any Work that requires Strength and joint Labour, as the launching a large Boat, or the like, they must have the Piper to regulate their Time, as well as Ufky, to keep up their Spirits in the Performance ; for Pay they often have little, or none at all.

NOTHING

Nothing is more common than to hear the Highlanders boast how much their Country might be improv'd, and that it would produce double what it does at present, if better Husbandry were introduced among them. For my own Part, it was always the only Amusement I had among the Hills, to observe every minute Thing in my Way; and I do assure you, I don't remember to have seen the least Spot that would bear Corn uncultivated, not even upon the Sides of the Hills, where it could be no otherwise broke up, than with a Spade. And as for Manure to supply the Salts, and enrich the Ground, they have hardly any. In Summer their Cattle are dispers'd about the *Sheelings*, and almost all the rest of the Year in other Parts of the Hills; and therefore all the Dung they can have, must be from the trifling Quantity made by the Cattle, while they are in the House. I never knew or heard of any Limestone, Chalk, or Marl they have in the Country; and if some  
of

of their Rocks might serve for Limestone in that Case, their Kilns, Carriage, and Fuel would render it so expensive, it would be the same Thing to them, as if there was none. Their great Dependance is upon the Nitre of the Snow; and they lament the Disappointment, if it does not fall early in the Season. Yet I have known, in some, a great Inclination to Improvement, and shall only instance in a very small Matter, which perhaps may be thought too inconsiderable to mention.

Not far from *Fort William*, I have seen Women with a little Horse-Dung brought upon their Backs, in *Creels* or Baskets from that Garrison; and on their Knees, spreading it with their Hands upon the Land, and even breaking the Balls, that every Part of the little Spot might have its due Proportion.

THESE Women have several Times brought me Hay to the Fort, which was made from Grass cut with a Knife, by the Way-side; and from one I have



bought two, or three Pen'noth; from another, the Purchase has been a Great; but Six-pen'noth was a most considerable Bargain.

AT their Return from the *Hay-market* they carried away the Dung of my Stable (which was one End of a dwelling Hut) in Manner abovementioned.

SPEAKING of Grass and Hay, it comes to my Remembrance, that in passing through a Space between the Mountains, not far from *Keppoch* in *Lochabar*, I observed, in the Hollow (though too narrow to admit much of the Sun) a greater Quantity of Grass than I remembered to have seen in any such Spot in the inner Parts of the Highlands. It was in the Month of *August* when it was grown rank and flagged pretty much, and therefore I was induced to ask why the Owner did not cut it? To this I was answered, it never had been mowed, but was left every Year as natural Hay for the Cattle in Winter, that is, to lie upon the Ground like

like Litter, and (according to their Description) the Cows routed for it in the Snow, like Hogs in a Dunghill: But the People have no Barns fit to contain a Quantity of Hay, and it would be impossible to secure it in Mows from the tempestuous eddy Winds, which would soon carry it over the Mountains: Besides, it could not well be made, by reason of Rains and want of Sun, and therefore they think it best to let it lie, as it does, with the Roots in the Ground.

THE Advantage of Enclosures is a mighty Topick with the Highlanders, though they cannot spare for Grass one Inch of Land that will bear Corn, or if they could, it would be a much more expensive Way of grazing their Cattle, than letting them run, as they do, in the Hills; but Enclosures, simply as such, do not better the Soil, or, if they might be supposed to be an Advantage to it; where is the Highland Tenant that can lay out ten Shillings for that Purpose? And, what would he be gainer by it in

the End, but to have his Rent raised, or his Farm divided with some other? Or, lastly, where are the Number of Highlanders that would patiently suffer such an inconvenient Innovation. For my Part, I think Nature has sufficiently enclosed their Lands by the Feet of the surrounding Mountains. Now, after what has been said, where can this Improvement be?

BUT it seems, they had rather you should think them ignorant, lazy, or any thing else, than entertain a bad Opinion of their Country. But I have dwelt too long upon this Head.

THEIR Rent is chiefly paid in Kind, that is to say, great Part of it in several Species arising from the Product of the Farm; such as Barly, Oatmeal, and what they call *Customs*, as Sheep, Lambs, Poultry, Butter, &c. and the Remainder, if any, is paid in Money, or an Addition of some one of the aforementioned Species, if Money be wanting.

THE

THE Gentlemen, who are near Relations of the Chief, hold pretty large Farms, if the Estate will allow it, perhaps twenty or thirty Pounds a Year, and they again, generally, parcel them out to under Tenants in small Portions. Hence it comes, that by such a Division of an old Farm (part of an upper Tenant's *Holding*) suppose, among eight Persons, each of them pays an eighth Part of every Thing, even to the Fraction of a Capon, which cannot, in the Nature of it be paid in Kind, but the Value of it is cast in with the rest of the Rent, and, notwithstanding the abovementioned *Customs* are placed in an upper Tenant's Rental, yet they properly belong to the Chief for the Maintenance of the Family in Provisions.

EVERY Year, after the Harvest, the Sheriff of the County, or his Deputy, together with a Jury of landed Men, sets a Rate upon Corn Provisions, and the



Custom of the Country regulates the rest.

THE Sheriff's Regulation for the Year is called the *Feers-price*, and serves for a Standard whereby to determine every thing relating to Rents and Bargains; so that if the Tenant is not provided with all the Species he is to pay, then, that which is wanting may be converted into Money, or something else with Certainty,

Before I conclude this Letter, I shall take notice of one thing, which, at first, I thought pretty extraordinary, and that is: If any landed Man refuses or fails to pay the King's Tax; then, by a Warrant from the Civil Magistrate, a proportionable Number of Soldiers are quartered upon him, with sometimes, a Commission-Officer to command them; all whom he must maintain till the *Cess* is fully discharged: This is a Penalty for his Default, even though he had not the Means to raise Money in all that time,  
and

and let it be ever so long, the Tax, in the End is still the same. You will not doubt that the Men, thus living upon free Quarters, use the best Interest with their Officers to be sent on such Parties.

## LETTER XXII.



LETTER

and let it be ever so long, the Tax in the  
 Book is still the same. You will not



## L E T T E R XXI.



O U will, it is likely, think it strange, that many of the Highland Tenants are to maintain a Family upon a Farm of twelve Merks, *Scots, per Annum*, which is thirteen Shillings and four Pence *sterling*, with, perhaps, a Cow or two, or a very few Sheep or Goats; but often the Rent is less, and the Cattle are wanting.

WHAT follows is a Specimen taken out of a Highland Rent-roll, and I do assure you it is genuine, and not the least by many.

*Donald*

	Scots Money.	English.	Stones.	lb. oz.	Butter.	Oatmeal.	Muttons.
Donald mac Oil vic ille Challum	£ 3 10 4	— £ 0 5 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	— 0 3 2	— 0 2 1	3	— 1 3	— $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{16}$
Murdoch mac illi Chrif	— £ 5 17 6	— £ 0 9 9 $\frac{1}{8}$	— 0 6 4	— 0 3 3	3	— 1 3	— $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{16}$
Duncan mac illi Phadrick	— £ 7 0 6	— £ 0 12 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	— 0 7 8	— 1 0 3	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	— 1 3	— $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{8}$ .

I SHALL here give you a Computation of the first Article, besides which there are seven more of the same Farm and Rent, as you may perceive by the Fraction of a Sheep in the last Column.

[illegible]



IN some Rentals you may see seven or eight Columns of various Species of Rent, or more, *viz.* Money, Barley, Oatmeal, Sheep, Lambs, Butter, Cheese, Capons, &c. but every Tenant does not pay all these Kinds, though many of them the greatest Part.

THE Landlord has, by Law, an *Hypothick*, or right of Pledge, with respect to the Corn, for so much as the current Year's Rent, and may, and often does, by himself or his Bailly, see it reaped to his own Use; or if that is not done, he may seize it in the Market or any where else; but this last Privilege of the Landlord does not extend to the Crop or Rent of any former Year.

THE Poverty of the Tenants has rendered it customary for the Chief, or Laird to free some of them every Year from all Arrears of Rent; this is supposed, upon an Average, to be about one Year in five of the whole Estate.

IF

IF the Tenant is to hire his Grazing in the Hills, he takes it by *Soumes*. A *Soume* is as much Grass as will maintain four Sheep; eight Sheep are equal to a Cow and a half, or forty Goats, but I do not remember how much is paid for every *Soume*. The reason of this Disproportion between the Goats and Sheep is, that after the Sheep have eat the Pasture bare, the Herbs, as Thyme, &c. that are left behind, are of little or no Value, except for the Brouzing of Goats.

THE Laird's Income is computed by *Chalders of Victual*, as they are called: A *Chalder* is sixteen *Bolls* of Corn, each *Boll* containing about six of our Bushels, and therefore, when any one speaks of the yearly Value of such a Laird's Estate, he tells you it is so many *Chalders*; but the Measure varies something in different Parts of the Country.

WHEN

WHEN a Son is born to the Chief of a Family, there generally arises a Contention among the Vassals, which of them shall have the fostering of the Child, when it is taken from the Nurse; and by this Means such Differences are sometimes fomented, as are hardly ever after thoroughly reconcil'd.

THE happy Man, who succeeds in his Suit, is ever after call'd the Foster-father; and his Children the Foster-brothers and Sisters of the young Laird.

THIS they reckon not only endears them to their Chief, and greatly strengthens their Interest with him, but gives them a great deal of Consideration among their Fellow-Vassals; and the Foster-brother having the same Education as the young Chief, may besides that, in Time become his *Hanchman*, or perhaps be promoted to that Office under the old Patriarch himself, if a Vacancy should happen. Or otherwise, by  
their

their Interest, obtain Orders and a Benefice.

THIS Officer is a Sort of Secretary, and is to be ready, upon all Occasions, to venture his Life, in Defence of his Master ; and at Drinking-bouts he stands behind his Seat, at his Haunch, from whence his Title is deriv'd, and watches the Conversation, to see if any one offends his Patron.

AN *English* Officer being in Company with a certain Chieftain, and several other Highland Gentlemen, near *Killinchumen*, had an Argument with the *Great Man* ; and both being well warm'd with Usky, at last the Dispute grew very hot.

A YOUTH who was *Hanchman*, not understanding one Word of *English*, imagin'd his Chief was insulted, and there-upon drew his Pistol from his Side, and snap'd it at the Officer's Head ; but the Pistol mis'd Fire, otherwise it is more



than probable he might have suffer'd Death from the Hand of that little Vermin.

BUT it is very disagreeable to an *Eng-lishman* over a Bottle, with the Highlanders, to see every one of them have his *Gilly*; that is, his Servant standing behind him all the while, let what will be the Subject of Conversation.

WHEN a Chief goes a Journey in the Hills, or makes a formal Visit to an Equal, he is said to be attended by all; or most Part of the Officers following, viz.

<i>The Hanchman,</i>	before describ'd.
<i>Bard,</i>	His Poet.
<i>Bladier,</i>	— Spokesman.
<i>Gilli-more,</i>	{ Carries his Broad-Sword.
<i>Gilli-casflue,</i>	{ Carries him, when on Foot, over the Fords.
<i>Gilly-comstraine,</i>	{ Leads his Horse in rough and dangerous Ways.
	<i>Gilly</i>

<i>Gilly-trushanarnish,</i>	The Baggage-Man.
<i>The Piper,</i>	{ Who being a Gentleman, I should have nam'd him sooner.
<i>And lastly,</i>	
<i>The Piper's Gilly,</i>	{ Who carries the Bag-Pipe.

THERE are likewise, some Gentlemen, near of Kin, who bear him Company; and besides, a Number of the common Sort, who have no particular Employment, but follow him only to partake of the Cheer.

I MUST own that all these Attendants, and the profound Respect they pay, must be flattering enough; tho' the Equipage has none of the best Appearance.

BUT this *State* may appear to sooth the Pride of the Chief to a vast Degree, if the Declaration of one of them was sincere; who at Dinner, before a good deal of Company, *English* as well as *Scots*, myself being one of the Number, affirm'd,

affirm'd, that if his Estate was free from Incumbrances, and was none of his own, and he was then put to chuse between that and the Estate of the Duke of *Newcastle*, supposing it to be thirty thousand Pounds a Year (as somebody said it was) he would make Choice of the former, with the *following* belonging to it, before the other without it. Now his Estate might be about five hundred Pounds a Year.

BUT this Pride is pretty costly; for as his Friend is to feed all these Attendants, so it comes to his own Turn to be at a like, or perhaps greater Expence, when the Visit is repaid. For they are generally attended in Proportion to the Strength of the Clan; and by this Intercourse they very much hurt one another in their Circumstances.

By what has been said, you may know in Part, how necessary the Rent call'd *Customs* is to the Family of a Highland Chief.

HERE

HERE I must ask a Space for those two Sons of *Apollo*; the *Bard* and the *Piper*.

THE *Bard* is skill'd in the Genealogy of all the Highland Families, sometimes Preceptor to the young Laird; celebrates in *Irish* Verse the Original of the Tribe, the famous warlike Actions of the successive Heads, and sings his own Lyrics as an Opiate to the Chief, when indispos'd for Sleep; but Poets are not equally esteem'd and honour'd in all Countries. I happen'd to be a Witness of the Dishonour done to the Muse, at the House of one of the Chiefs; where two of these Bards were set at a good Distance, at the lower End of a long Table, with a Parcel of Highlanders of no extraordinary Appearance, over a Cup of Ale. Poor Inspiration!

THEY were not ask'd to drink a Glass of Wine at our Table, tho' the whole Company at it consisted only of the *Great*

VOL. II.

M

Man,



*Man*, one of his near Relations, and myself.

AFTER some little Time, the Chief order'd one of them to sing me a Highland Song. The Bard readily obey'd, and with a hoarse Voice, and in a Tune of few various Notes, began, as I was told, one of his own Lyrics; and when he had proceeded to the fourth or fifth Stanza, I perceived by the Names of several Persons, Glens and Mountains, which I had known or heard of before, that it was an Account of some Clan Battle. But in his going on, the Chief (who piques himself upon his School-Learning) at some particular Passage, bid him cease, and cry'd out to me, *There's nothing like that in Virgil or Homer.* I bow'd, and told him I believ'd so. This you may believe was very edifying and delightful.

I HAVE had Occasion before to say something of the Piper, but not as an Officer of the Household.

IN a Morning, while the Chief is dressing, he walks backward and forward, close under the Window without Doors; playing on his Bag-Pipe, with a most upright Attitude, and majestick Stride.

It is a Proverb in *Scotland*, viz. *The stately Step of a Piper*. When required, he plays at Meals, and in an Evening, is to divert the Guests with his Musick, when the Chief has Company with him; his Attendance in a Journey, or at a Visit, I have mentioned before.

HIS *Gilly* holds the Pipe, 'till he begins, and the Moment he has done with the Instrument, he disdainfully throws it down upon the Ground, as being only the passive Means of conveying his Skill to the Ear; and not a proper Weight for him to carry or bear at other Times. But for a contrary Reason, his *Gilly* snatches it up, which is, that the Pipe may not suffer Indignity from his Neglect.

THE Captain of one of the Highland Companies entertain'd me some Time ago at *Sterling*, with an Account of a Dispute that happen'd in his *Corps* about Precedency. This Officer among the rest, had received Orders to add a Drum to his Bagpipe, as a more military Instrument; for the Pipe was to be retain'd, because the Highland Men could hardly be brought to march without it. Now the Contest between the Drummer and the Piper arose about the Post of Honour, and at length the Contention grew exceeding hot, which the Captain having Notice of, he call'd them both before him, and in the End decided the Matter in Favour of the Drum; whereupon the Piper remonstrated very warmly. *Ads Wunds, Sir,* says he, *and shall a little Rascal that beats upon a Sheep-skin, tak the right Haund of me, that am a Musician?*

THERE are in the Mountains both *red Deer* and *Roes*, but neither of them in any great Numbers, that ever I could find.

find. The red Deer are large, and keep their Haunts in the highest Mountains, but the Roe is less than our fallow Deer, and partakes, in some Measure, of the Nature of the Hare ; having no Fat about the Flesh, and hiding in the Clefts of Rocks, and other Hollows, from the Sight of Pursuers. These keep chiefly in the Woods.

A PACK of Hounds, like that of *Actæon*, in the same metaphorical Sense, would soon devour their Master. But, supposing they could easily be maintain'd, they would be of no Use, it being impossible for them to hunt over such Rocks and rugged steep Declivities ; or if they could do this, their Cry in those open Hills would soon fright all the Deer out of that Part of the Country. This was the Effect of one single Hound, whose Voice I have often heard in the Dead of the Night (as I lay in Bed) ecchoing among the Mountains ; he was kept by an *English* Gentleman, at one of the Barracks, and it was loudly com-



plain'd of by some of the Lairds, as being prejudicial to their Estates.

WHEN a solemn Hunting is resolv'd on, for the Entertainment of Relations and Friends, the Haunt of the Deer being known, a Number of the Vassals are summon'd, who readily obey by Inclination; and are besides oblig'd by the Tenure of their Lands, of which one Article is, that they shall attend the *Master* at his Huntings. This, I think, was Part of the ancient Vassalage in *England*.

THE Chief convenes what Numbers he thinks fit, according to the Strength of his Clan; perhaps three or four hundred. With these he surrounds the Hill, and as they advance upwards, the Deer flies the Sight of them, first of one Side, then of another; and they still, as they mount, get into closer Order, 'till in the End he is enclos'd by them in a small Circle, and there they hack him down with their broad Swords. And they generally

nerally do it so dexterously, as to preserve the Hide entire.

IF the Chace be in a Wood, which is mostly upon the Declivity of a rocky Hill, the Tenants spread themselves as much as they can, in a Rank extending upwards; and march, or rather crawl forward, with a hideous Yell. Thus they drive every Thing before them, while the Laird and his Friends are waiting at the farther End with their Guns, to shoot the Deer. But it is difficult to force the Roes out of their Cover, inso-much that when they come into the open Light, they sometimes turn back upon the Huntsmen, and are taken alive.

WHAT I have been saying on this Head, is only to give you some Taste of the Highland Hunting; for the Hills, as they are various in their Form, require different Dispositions of the Men that compose the Pack. The first of the two Paragraphs next above, relates only to such a Hill as rises something in the

Figure of a Cone; and the other you see, is the Side of a Hill, which is cloath'd with a Wood, and this last is more particularly the Shelter of the Roe. A further Detail I think would become tedious.

WHEN the Chief would have a Deer only for his Household, the Game-Keeper, and one or two more, are sent into the Hills, with Guns and Oatmeal for their Provision; where they often lie Night after Night, to wait an Opportunity of providing Venison for the Family. This has been done several Times for me, but always without Effect.

THE Foxes and wild Cats (or Cata-mountain) are both very large in their Kind, and always appear to have fed plentifully. They do the Highlanders much more Hurt in their Poultry, &c. than they yield them Profit by their Furs; and the Eagles do them more Mischief, than both the others together. It was one of their chief Complaints, when

when they were disarm'd in the Year 1725, that they were depriv'd of the Means to destroy those noxious Animals; and that a great Increase of them must necessarily follow the Want of their Fire-Arms.

Of the eatable Part of the feather'd Kind peculiar to the Mountains, is, First, the *Cobberkely*, which is sometimes call'd a wild Turkey, but not like it, otherwise than in Size. This is very seldom to be met with (being an Inhabitant of very high and unfrequented Hills) and is therefore esteem'd a great Rarity for the Table.

NEXT is the *black Cock*, which resembles in Size and Shape, a Pheasant, but is black and shining like a Raven; but the Hen is not, in Shape or Colour, much unlike to a Hen-Pheasant.

AND lastly, the *Tormican* is near about the Size of the Moor-Fowl (or Grouse) but of a lighter Colour; which turns almost



almost white in Winter. These I am told feed chiefly upon the tender Tops of the Fir-Branches, which I am apt to believe; because the Taste of them has something tending to Turpentine, tho' not disagreeable. It is said, if you throw a Stone, so as to fall beyond it, the Bird is thereby so much amus'd or daunted, that it will not rise 'till you are very near; but I have suspected this to be a Sort of *Comundrum*, signifying they are too shy to suffer an Approach near enough for that Purpose, like what they tell the Children about the Salt and the Bird.

THE Tribes will not suffer Strangers to settle within their Precinct, or even those of another Clan to enjoy any Possession among them; but will soon constrain them to quit their Pretensions, by Cruelty to their Persons, or Mischief to their Cattle, or other Property. Of this there happen'd two flagrant Instances, within a few Years pass'd.

THE

THE first was as follows: *Gordon*, Laird of *Glenbucket*, had been invested by the D. of G. in some Lands in *Badenoch*, by Virtue, I think, of a *Wadset* or Mortgage. These Lands lay among the *Macphersons*, but the Tenants of that Name refused to pay the Rent to the new Landlord, or to acknowledge him as such.

THIS Refusal put him upon the Means to eject them by Law; whereupon the Tenants came to a Resolution to put an End to his Suit and new Settlement, in the Manner following.

FIVE or six of them, young Fellows, the Sons of Gentlemen, enter'd the Door of his Hut; and in fawning Words told him, they were sorry any Dispute had happen'd. That they were then resolv'd to acknowledge him as their immediate Landlord, and would regularly pay him their Rent. At the same Time they begg'd he would withdraw his Process, and they

they hop'd they should be agreeable to him for the future. All this while they were almost imperceptibly drawing nearer and nearer to his Bed-side, on which he was sitting, in order to prevent his defending himself (as they knew him to be a Man of distinguish'd Courage) and then fell suddenly on him; some cutting him with their *Dirks*, and others plunging them into his Body. This was perpetrated within Sight of the Banack of *Rutbven*.

I CAN'T forbear to tell you how this Butchery ended, with Respect both to him and those treacherous Villains.

HE, with a Multitude of Wounds upon him, made a Shift, in the Bustle, to reach down his broad Sword from the Tester of his Bed, which was very low; and with it he drove all the Assassins before him. And afterwards from the Duke's Abhorrence of so vile a Fact, and with the Assistance of the Troops, they

they were driven out of the Country, and forced to fly to foreign Parts.

By the Way, the Duke claims the Right of Chief to the *Macphersons*; as he is, in Fact, of the *Gordons*.

THE other Example is of a Minister, who had a small Farm assign'd him, and upon his Entrance to it, some of the Clan, in the Dead of the Night, fired five Balls through his Hut, which all lodg'd in his Bed; but he happening to be absent that Night, escap'd their Barbarity, but was forced to quit the Country. Of this, he made to me an affecting Complaint.

THIS Kind of Cruelty, I think, arises from their Dread of Innovations, and the Notion they entertain, that they have a Kind of hereditary Right to their Farms; and that none of them are to be disposs'd, unless for some great Transgression against their Chief, in which Case every Indi-



Individual would consent to their Expulsion.

HAVING lately mention'd the Dirk, I think it may not be unseasonable here, to give you a short Description of that dangerous Weapon; and the rather, as I may have Occasion to speak of it hereafter.

THE Blade is straight, and generally above a Foot long, the Back near an Inch thick; the Point goes off like a Tuck, and the Handle is something like that of a Sickle. They pretend they can't well do without it, as being useful to them in cutting Wood, and upon many other Occasions; but it is a conceal'd Mischief hid under the Plaid, ready for secret stabbing, and in a close Encounter, there is no Defence against it.

I AM far from thinking there is any Thing in the Nature of a Highlander, as such, that should make him cruel and remorseless;

remorseless; on the contrary, I cannot but be of Opinion, that Nature in general is originally the same in all Mankind, and that the Difference between Country and Country arises from Education and Example. And from this Principle I conclude, that even a *Hottentot* Child being brought into *England*, before he had any Knowledge, might by a virtuous Education, and generous Example, become as much an *Englishman* in his Heart, as any Native whatever.

BUT that the Highlanders, for the most Part are cruel, is beyond Dispute; tho' all Clans are not alike merciless. In general they have not Generosity enough to give Quarter to an Enemy that falls in their Power; or do they seem to have any Remorse at shedding Blood without Necessity.

THIS appear'd a few Years ago, with Respect to a Party of Soldiers, consisting of a Serjeant and twelve Men, who were

were sent into *Lochaber* after some Cows; that were said to be stolen.

THE Soldiers, with their Arms slung, were carelessly marching along by the Side of a Lake, where only one Man could pass in Front; and in this Circumstance fell into an Ambuscade of a great Number of Highland Men, Vassals of an attainted Chief, who was in Exile, when his Clan was accused of the Theft.

THESE were lodg'd in a Hollow on the Side of a rocky Hill; and tho' they were themselves out of all Danger, or might have descended and disarm'd so small a Party, yet they chose rather, with their Fire-Arms, as it were, wantonly to pick them off, almost one by one, 'till they had destroy'd them all; except two, who took to their Heels, and waded a small River into the Territory of another Chief, where they were safe from further Pursuit. For the Chiefs (like Princes upon the Continent, whose Domi-

Dominions lie contiguous) do not invade each others Boundaries, while they are in Peace and Friendship with one another, but demand Redress of Wrongs; and whosoever should do otherwise, would commit an Offence, in which every Tribe is interested, besides the lasting Feud it might create between the two neighbouring Clans.

P. S. One of these Soldiers, who in his Flight had fix'd his Bayonet, turn'd about at the Edge of the Water, upon the Highland Man; who, for greater Speed, had no other Arms than his broad Sword, and at the same Time, as 'tis said, the Soldier at once sent his Bayonet and a Ball through his Body.





## LETTER XXII.



UT the Rancour of some of those People in another Case was yet more extraordinary than the Instance in my last Letter, as the Objects of their Malice could not seem, even to the utmost Cowardice, to be in any manner of Condition to annoy them. This was after the Battle of *Glenshiels*, in the Rebellion of 1719, before mentioned.

As

As the Troops were marching, from the Field of Action to a Place of Encampment, some of the Men, who were dangerously wounded, after their being carried some little Way on Horseback, complained they could no longer bear that uneasy Carriage, and begged they might be left behind 'till some more gentle Conveyance could be provided.

IN about three or four Hours (the little Army being incamped) Parties were sent to them with Hurdles that had been made to serve as a Kind of Litters; but when they arrived they found to their Astonishment, that those poor miserable Creatures had been stabbed with Dirks in twenty Places of their Legs and Arms as well as their Bodies, and even those that were dead had been used in the same savage Manner. This I have been assured of by several Officers who were in the Battle, *Scots* as well as *English*.

I MAKE no manner of Doubt you will take what is to follow to be an odd Transition, *i. e.* from the Cruelty of the ordinary Highlanders to Dialect and Orthography, although you have met with some others not more consistent, but then you will recollect what I said in my first Epistle; that I should not confine myself to Method, but give you my Account just as the several Parts of the Subject should occur from my Memorandums and Memory.

STRANGE Encomiums I have heard from the Natives upon the Language of their Country, although it be but a Corruption of the *Irish* Tongue, and if you could believe some of them, it is so expressive that it wants only to be better known to become universal. But as for myself, who can only judge of it by the Ear, it seems to me to be very harsh in Sound, like the *Welsh*, and altogether as guttural, which last, you know, is a  
2  
Quality

Quality, long since banished all the polite Languages in *Europe*.

IT likewise seems to me, as if the Natives affected to call it *Erst*, as though it were a Language peculiar to their Country; but an *Irish* Gentleman who never before was in *Scotland*, and made, with me, a highland *Tour*, was perfectly understood, even by the common People; and several of the Lairds took me aside to ask me who he was, for that they never heard their Language spoken in such Purity before. This Gentleman told me, that he found the Dialect to vary as much in different Parts of the Country as in any two Counties of *England*.

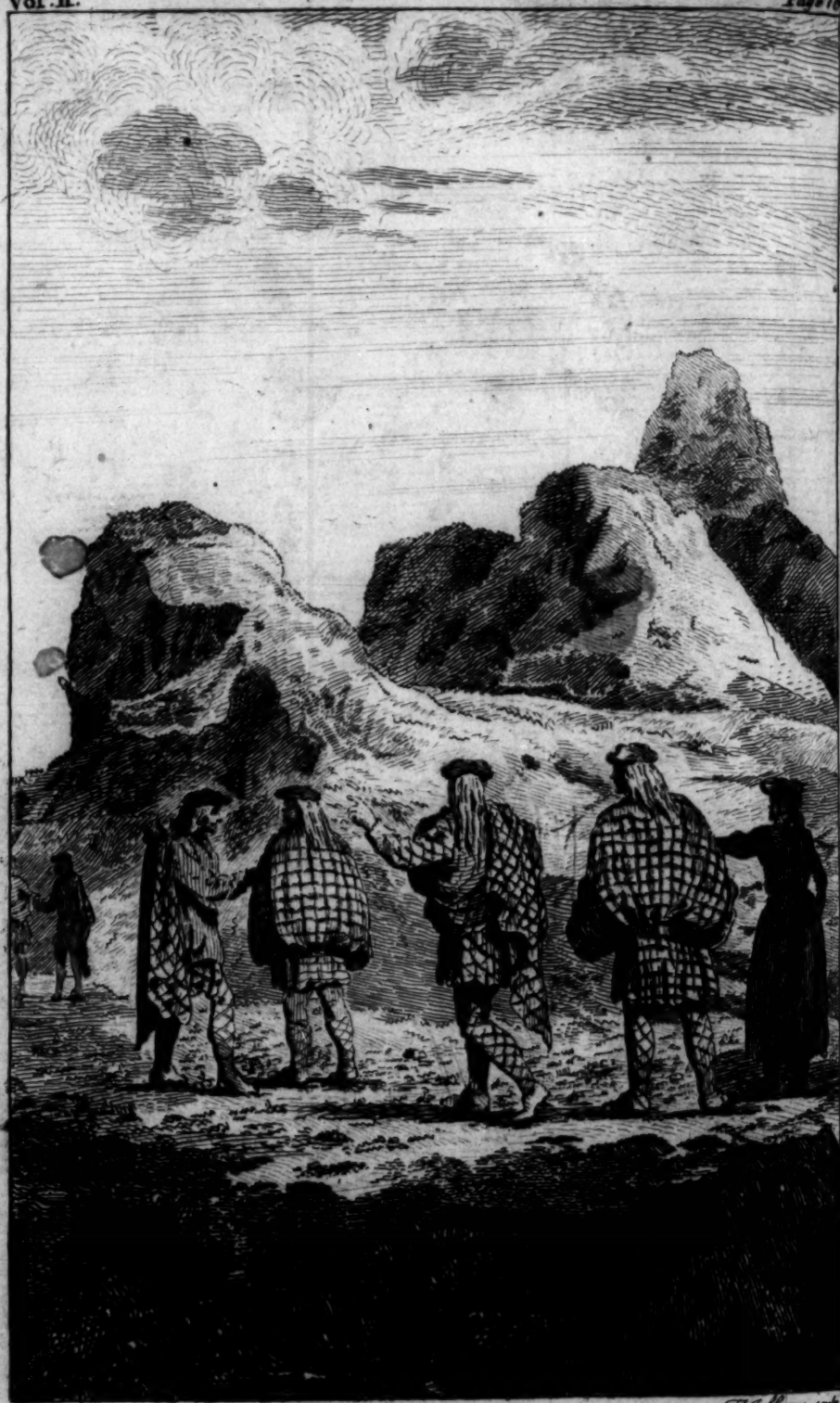
THERE are very few who can write the Character, of which the Alphabet is, as follows.



## Pronounced

a	α	a	Ailim.
b	β	b	Beith.
c	γ	c	Coll.
d	δ	d	Duir.
e	ε	e	Eadha.
f	φ	f	Fearn.
g	ζ	g	Gort.
h	η	h	Uath.
i	ι	i	Jogha.
l	λ	l	Luis.
m	μ	m	Muin.
n	ν	n	Nuin.
o	ο	o	Oun.
p	π	p	Peithboc.
r	ρ	r	Ruïs.
s	σ	s	Suil.
t	τ	t	Tinne.
u	υ	u	Uir.





J. Gifford sculp

IN writing *English* they seem to have no Rule of Orthography, and they profess they think good Spelling of no great use, but if they read *English* Authors, I wonder their Memory does not retain the Figures, or Forms of common Words, especially Monosyllables; but it may, for ought I know, be Affectation.

I HAVE frequently received Letters from Ministers and lay Gentlemen, both esteemed for their Learning in dead Languages, that have been so ill spelt, I thought I might have expected better from an ordinary Woman in *England*. As for one single Example; for *Heirs* (of *Latin* Derivation) *Airs* repeated several times in the same Letter; and further, one Word was often variously spelt in the same Page.

THE Highland Dress consists of a Bonnet made of Thrum without a Brim, a short Coat, a Waistcoat longer by five or six Inches, short Stockings and *Brogues*



or Pumps without Heels. By the way they cut Holes in their *Brogues*, though new made, to let out the Water when they have far to go and Rivers to pass; this they do to preserve their Feet from galling.

FEW besides Gentlemen wear the *Trowze*, that is, the Breeches and Stockings all of one Piece and drawn on together; over this Habit they wear a Plaid, which is usually three Yards long and two Breadths wide, and the whole Garb is made of chequered Tartan or Plaiding; This, with the Sword and Pistol, is called a *full Dress*, and to a well proportioned Man with any tolerable Air, it makes an agreeable Figure; but this you have seen in *London*, and it is chiefly their Mode of dressing when they are in the Lowlands, or when they make a neighbouring Visit, or go any were on Horseback; but when those among them who travel on Foot, and have not Attendants to carry them over the Waters, they

they vary it into the *Quelt*, which is a *Manner* I am about to describe.

THE common Habit of the ordinary Highlands is far from being acceptable to the Eye; with them a small Part of the Plaid, which is not so large as the former, is set in Folds and girt round the Waste to make of it a short Petticoat that reaches half Way down the Thigh, and the rest is brought over the Shoulders, and then fastened before, below the Neck, often with a Fork, and sometimes with a Bodkin, or sharpened Piece of Stick, so that they make pretty near the Appearance of the poor Women in *London* when they bring their Gowns over their Heads to shelter them from the Rain. In this way of wearing the Plaid, they have sometimes nothing else to cover them, and are often barefoot; but some I have seen shod with a kind of Pumps made out of a raw Cow-hide with the Hair turned outward, which being ill made, the Wearer's Feet looked something like those of a rough-footed  
Hen

Hen or Pigeon : These are called *Quar-rants*, and are not only offensive to the Sight but intolerable to the Smell of those who are near them. The Stocking rises no higher than the Thick of the Calf, and from the Middle of the Thigh to the Middle of the Leg is a naked Space, which being exposed to all Weathers, becomes tanned and freckled, and the Joint being mostly infected with the Country Distemper, the whole is very disagreeable to the Eye.

THIS Dress is called the *Quelt*, and for the most part they wear the Petticoat so very short, that in a windy Day, going up a Hill, or stooping, the Indecency of it is plainly discovered.

A Highland Gentleman told me, one Day merrily, as we were speaking of a dangerous Precipice we had passed over together ; that a Lady of a noble Family had complained to him very seriously ; That as she was going over the same Place with a *Gilly*, who was upon an upper

upper Path leading her Horfe with a long String, ſhe was ſo terrified with the Sight of the Abyſs, that, to avoid it, ſhe was forced to look up towards the bare Highlander all the Way long.

I HAVE obſerved before, that the Plaid ſerves the ordinary People for a Cloak by Day, and Bedding at Night : By the latter it imbibes ſo much Perſpiration, that no one Day can free it from the filthy Smell ; and even ſome of better than ordinary Appearance, when the Plaid falls from the Shoulder, or otherwiſe requires to be readjuſted, while you are talking with them, toſs it over again, as ſome People do the Knots of their Wigs, which conveys the Offence in Whiffs that are intolerable, of this they ſeem not to be ſenſible, for it is often done only to give themſelves Airs.

VARIOUS Reaſons are given both for and againſt the Highland Dreſs. It is urged againſt it, that it diſtinguiſhes the Natives as a Body of People diſtinct and ſeparate



separate from the rest of the Subjects of *Great Britain*, and, thereby, is one Cause of their narrow Adherence among themselves to the Exclusion of all the rest of the Kingdom; but the Part of the Habit chiefly objected to is the Plaid (or Mantle) which, they say, is calculated for the Encouragement of an idle Life in lying about upon the Heath in the Day-time, instead of following some lawful Employment; that it serves to cover them in the Night when they lie in wait among the Mountains to commit their Robberies and Depredations, and is composed of such Colours as altogether in the Mass so nearly resemble the Heath on which they lie, that it is hardly to be distinguished from it until one is so near them as to be within their Power, if they have any evil Intention.

THAT it renders them ready at a Moment's Warning to join in any Rebellion, as they carry continually their Tents about them.

AND

AND, lastly, it was thought necessary in *Ireland* to suppress that Habit by Act of Parliament for the above Reasons, and no Complaint, for the want of it, now remains among the Mountaineers of that Country.

ON the other hand it is alledged; the Dress is most convenient to those who, with no ill Design, are obliged to travel from one Part to another upon their lawful Occasions, *viz.*

THAT they would not be so free to skip over the Rocks and Bogs with Breeches, as they are in the short Petticoat.

THAT it would be greatly incommo-  
dious, to those who are frequently to  
wade through Waters, to wear Breeches,  
which must be taken off upon every such  
Occurrence, or would not only gall the  
Wearer, but render it very unhealthful  
and dangerous to their Limbs to be con-  
stantly

stantly wet in that Part of the Body, especially in Winter-time when they might be frozen.

AND with respect to the Plaid, in particular, the Distance between one Place of Shelter and another are often too great to be reached before Night comes on, and being intercepted by sudden Floods, or hindred by other Impediments, they are frequently obliged to lie all Night in the Hills, in which Case they must perish were it not for the Covering they carry with them.

THAT even if they should be so fortunate as to reach some hospitable Hut, they must lie upon the Ground uncovered, there being nothing to be spared from the Family for that Purpose.

AND to conclude, a few Shillings will buy this Dress for an ordinary Highlander, who very probably might hardly ever be in Condition to purchase a Low-land Sute, though of the coarsest Cloth  
or

or Stuff, fit to keep him warm in that cold Climate.

I SHALL determine nothing in this Dispute, but leave you to judge which of these two Reasonings is the most cogent.

THE whole People are fond and tenacious of the Highland Cloathing, as you may believe by what is here to follow.

BEING, in a wet Season, upon one of my Peregrinations, accompanied by a Highland Gentleman, who was one of the Clan through which I was passing; I observed the Women to be in great Anger with him about something that I did not understand; at length, I asked him wherein he had offended them? Upon this Question he laughed, and told me his great Coat was the Cause of their Wrath, and that their Reproach was, that he could not be contented with the Garb of his Ancestors, but was degenerated



rated into a Lowlander, and condescended to follow their unmanly Fashions.

THE wretched Appearance of the poor Highland Women that come to this Town has been mentioned; and here I shall step out of the way to give you a notable Instance of Frugality in one of a higher Rank.

THERE is a Laird's Lady, about a Mile from one of the Highland Garrisons, who is often seen from the Ramparts on *Sunday* Mornings coming barefoot to the Kirk with her Maid carrying the Stockings and Shoes after her. She Stops at the Foot of a certain Rock, that serves her for a Seat, not far from the Hovel they call a Church, and there she puts them on, and in her Return to the same Place, she prepares to go home barefoot as she came, thus reversing the old *Mosaic* Precept. What *English* Squire was ever blessed with such a Housewife!

BUT

BUT this Instance, though true to my Knowledge, I have thought something extraordinary, because the Highlanders are shy of exposing their Condition to Strangers, especially the *English*, and more particularly to a Number of Officers to whom they are generally desirous to make their best Appearance. But in my Journies, when they did not expect to be observed by any but their own Country People, I have twice surprized the Laird and his Lady without Shoes or Stockings, a good Way from Home, in cold Weather. The Kirk, above mentioned, brings to my Memory a Curiosity of the same kind.

AT a Place in *Badenoch*, called *Ilan Dou*, as I passed by a Hut of Turf something larger than ordinary, but taking little Notice of it, I was called upon by one of the Company to stop and observe its Figure, which proved to be the Form of a Cross: This occasioned several Jokes from a Libertine and a Presbyterian upon

the Highland Cathedral, and the Non-Jurors, in all which, they perfectly agreed.

THE ordinary Girls wear nothing upon their Heads until they are married or have a Child, except sometimes, a Fillet of red or blue coarse Cloth, of which they are very proud; but often their Hair hangs down over the Forehead like that of a wild Colt.

IF they wear Stockings, which is very rare, they lay them in Plaits one above another from the Ankle up to the Calf, to make their Legs appear, as near as they can, in the Form of a Cylinder; but I think I have seen something like this among the poor *German* Refugee Women, and the *Moorish* Men in *London*. By the way, these Girls, if they have no Pretensions to Family (as many of them have, though in Rags) they are vain of being with Child by a Gentleman, and when he makes Love to one of them, she will plead her Excuse, in saying

saying, he undervalues himself, and, that she is a poor Girl not worth his Trouble, or something to that purpose.

THIS easy Compliance proceeds chiefly from a kind of Ambition established by Opinion and Custom; for, as Gentility is of all things esteemed the most valuable in the Notion of those People, so this kind of Commerce renders the poor plebeian Girl, in some measure, superior to her former Equals.

FROM thenceforward she becomes proud, and they grow envious of her being singled out from among them, to receive the Honour of a Gentleman's particular Notice; but otherwise they are generally far from being immodest, and as Modesty is the Capital feminine Virtue, in that, they may be a Reproach to some in higher Circumstances, who have lost that decent and endearing Quality.



You know I should not venture to talk in this manner at ——— where Modesty would be decryed as impolite and troublesome, and I and my slender Party ridiculed, and born down by a vast Majority. I shall here give you a Sample of the Wretchedness of some of them.

IN one of my northern Journies, where I travelled in a good deal of Company, there was among the rest a *Scots* Baronet, who is a Captain in the Army, and does not seem (at least to me) to affect Concealment of his Country's Disadvantage. This Gentleman, at our Inn, when none but he and I were together, examined the Maid Servant about her way of living, and she told him (as he interpreted it to me) that she never was in a Bed in her Life, or ever took off her Cloaths while they would hang together; but in this last, I think, she was too general, for I am pretty sure she was forced to pull

pull them off now and then for her own Quiet. But I must go a little further.

ONE Half of the Hut, by Partition, was taken up with the Field-bed of the principal Person among us, and therefore the Man and his Wife very courteously offered to sit up and leave their Bed to the Baronet and me (for the rest of the Company were dispersed about in Barns) but we could not resolve to accept the Favour for certain Reasons, but chose rather to lie upon the Benches with our Saddles for Pillows.

BEING in a high Part of the Country, the Night was excessive cold with some Snow upon the Mountains, though in *August*, and the next Day was the hottest that, I think, I ever felt in my Life.

THE violent Heat of the Sun among the Rocks made my new Companions (Natives of the Hovel) such voracious Canibals that I was obliged to lag behind, and set my Servant to take Vengeance on

them for the plentiful Repast they were making at my Expence, and without my Consent, and by which I was told they were become as red as Blood. But I should have let you know, that when the Table, over Night, was spread with such Provisions as were carried with us, our chief Man would needs have the Lady of the House to grace the Board, and it fell to my Lot to sit next to her till I had loaded her Plate, and bid her go and sup with her Husband, for I foresaw the Consequence of our Conjunction.

THE young Children of the ordinary Highlanders are miserable Objects indeed, and are mostly over-run with that Distemper, which some of the old Men are hardly ever freed of from their Infancy. I have often seen them come out from the Huts early in a cold Morning, stark naked, and squat themselves down (if I might decently use the Comparison) like Dogs on a Dunghil, upon a certain Occasion after Confinement. And at other times they have but little to defend

send them from the Inclemencies of the Weather in so cold a Climate ; nor are the Children of some Gentlemen in much better Condition, being strangely neglected 'till they are six or seven Years old ; this one might know by a Saying I have often heard, *viz. That a Gentleman's Bearn's are to be distinguished by their speaking English.*

I WAS invited one Day to dine with a Laird, not very far within the Hills, and observing, about the House, an *English* Soldier, whom I had often seen before, in this Town, I took an Opportunity to ask him several Questions. This Man was a Bird-catcher, and employed by the Laird to provide him with small Birds for the Exercise of his Hawks.

AMONG other things, he told me, that for three or four Days after his first coming, he had observed in the Kitchen (an Out-house Hovel) a Parcel of dirty Children half naked, whom he took to belong to some poor Tenant, 'till, at



last he found they were a Part of the Family ; but although these were so little regarded, the young Laird, about the Age of fourteen, was going to the University, and the eldest Daughter, about sixteen, sat with us at Table, clean, and genteely dressed.

BUT perhaps it may seem, that in this and other Observations of the like kind, whenever I have met with one particular Fact, I would make it thought to be general. I do assure you it is not so ; but when I have known any thing to be common, I have endeavoured to illustrate it by some particular Example. Indeed, there is hardly any thing of this sort, that I have mentioned, can be so general as to be free from all Exception, it is Justification enough to me if the Matter be generally known to answer my Description, or what I have related of it. But I think an Apology of this nature to you is needless.

It is impossible for me, from my own Knowledge, to give you an Account of the ordinary way of Living of those Gentlemen, because, when any of us (the *English*) are invited to their Houses there is always an Appearance of Plenty to Excess, and it has been often said, they will ransack all their Tenants rather than we should think meanly of their House-keeping; but I have heard it from many whom they have employed, and perhaps had little regard to their Observations as inferior People; that, although they have been attended at Dinner by five or six Servants, yet, with all that State, they have often dined upon Oatmeal varied several ways, pickled Herrings, or other such cheap and indifferent Diet, but though I could not personally know their ordinary Bill of Fare, yet I have had Occasion to observe they do not live in the cleanest manner, though some of them, when in *England*, affect the utmost Nicety in that Particular.

A FRIEND of mine told me some time ago, that, in his Journey hither, he stopped to bait at the *Bull Inn* at *Stamford*, which, I think, is one among the best in *England*. He soon received a Message, by the Landlord, from two Gentlemen in the next Room, who were going from these Parts to *London*, proposing they might all dine together; this he readily consented to, as being more agreeable to him than dining alone.

As they sat at Table waiting for Dinner, one of them found fault with the Table-cloth, and said, it was not clean; there was, it seems, a Spot or two upon it, which he told them was only the Stain of Claret, that could not, at once, be perfectly washed out; then they wiped their Knives, Forks and Plates with the Napkins, and, in short, nothing was clean enough for them, and this to a Gentleman, who is, himself extremely nice in every thing of that Nature; at last, says my Friend, vexed  
at

at the impertinent Farce, as he called it, Gentlemen, says he, I am vastly pleased, at your Dislikes, as I am now upon my Journey to *Scotland*, where I have never yet been, because I must infer I shall there find these Things in better Condition. *Troth* (says one of them) *ye canno want it.*

I AM sorry for such Instances whereby a Fop, conscious of the Fallacy, exposes his Country, and brings a Ridicule upon other Gentlemen of Modesty and good Sense, to serve a momentary Vanity, if not to give Affronts by such gross Impositions.

I KNOW very well what my Friend thinks of them now, and perhaps, by their Means, of many others who do not deserve it.

THERE is one Gasconade of the People hereabouts which is extraordinary; they are often boasting of the great Hospitality of the Highlanders to Strangers; for



for my own Part, I do not remember to have received one Invitation from them, but when it was with an apparent View to their own Interest; on the contrary, I have several times been unasked to eat, though there was nothing to be purchased within many Miles of the Place.

BUT one particular Instance was most inhospitable.

BEING benighted; soon after it was dark, I made up to the House of one to whom I was well known, and though I had five or six Miles to travel over a dangerous rugged Way, wherein there was no other Shelter to be expected; yet, upon the Trampling of my Horses before the House, the Lights went out in the Twinkling of an Eye, and Deafness, at once, seized the whole Family.

THE latter Part of what I have writ of this Letter relates, chiefly, to *the* Genmen who inhabit the Hills not far from the Borders of the Lowlands, or not very far

far from the Sea, or Communication with it by Lakes, as indeed most Part of the Houses of the Chiefs of Clans are in one or other of these Situations.

THESE are sometimes built with Stone and Lime, and though not large, except some few, are pretty commodious, at least, with Comparison to these that are built in the manner of the Huts, of which, if any one has a Room above, it is, by way of Eminence, called a *lofted* House; but in the inner Part of the Mountains there are no Stone Buildings that I know of, except the Barracks; and one may go a hundred Miles an end without seeing any other Dwellings than the common Huts of Turf.

I HAVE, indeed, heard of one that was intended to be built with Stone in a remote Part of the Highlands, from whence the Laird sent a Number of Highlanders with Horses to fetch a Quantity of Lime from the Borders; but in their way Home there happened to fall

fall a good deal of Rain, and the Lime began to crackle and smoke : The Highlanders not thinking, of all Things, Water would occasion Fire, threw it all into a shallow Rivulet in order to quench it, before they proceeded further homeward ; and this, they say, put an End to the Project.

BUT I take this to be a Lowland Sneer upon the Highlanders, though not improbable.

I HAVE mentioned, above, among other Situations of Stone-built Houses, some that are near to Lakes, which have a Communication with the Sea.

THERE are, in several Parts of the Highlands, winding Hollows between the Feet of the Mountains whereinto the Sea flows, of which Hollows some are navigable for Ships of Burden for ten or twenty Miles together, inland : Those the Natives call *Lochs* or Lakes, although they

they are salt, and have a Flux and Re-  
flux, and therefore, more properly,  
should be called Arms of the Sea.

I COULD not but think this Explana-  
tion necessary to distinguish those Waters  
from the standing fresh water Lakes,  
which I have endeavoured to describe in  
a former Letter.



LET-





## LETTER XXIII.



**W**HEN a young Couple are married, for the first Night, the Company keep Possession of the dwelling-House or Hut, and send the Bridegroom and Bride to a Barn or Out-House, giving them Straw, Heath, or Fearn for a Bed, with Blankets for their Covering; and then they make merry, and dance to the Piper all the Night long.

Soon after the Wedding-Day, the new-married Woman sets herself about spinning her winding Sheet, and a Husband that should sell or pawn it, is esteem'd

esteem'd, among all Men, one of the most profligate.

AT a young Highlander's first setting up for himself, if he be of any Consideration, he goes about among his near Relations and Friends, and from one he begs a Cow, from another a Sheep; a Third gives him Seed to sow his Land, and so on, 'till he has procur'd for himself a tolerable Stock for a Beginner. This they call *Thigging*.

AFTER the Death of any one, not in the lowest Circumstances, the Friends and Acquaintance of the Deceased assemble to keep the near Relations Company the first Night; and they dance, as if it were at a Wedding, 'till the next Morning, tho' all the Time the Corps lies before them in the same Room. If the deceased be a Woman, the Widower leads up the first Dance; if a Man, the Widow. But this Highland Custom I knew, to my Disturbance, within less than a Quarter of a Mile of *Edinburgh*,

before I had been among the Mountains. It was upon the Death of a Smith, next Door to my Lodgings, who was a Highlander.

THE upper Class hire Women to moan and lament at the Funeral of their nearest Relations. These Women cover their Heads with a small Piece of Cloth, mostly Green, and every now and then break out into a hideous Howl and Hobo-bo-bo-boo ; as I have often heard is done in some Parts of *Ireland*.

THIS Part of the Ceremony is call'd a *Coronoch*, and generally speaking, is the Cause of much Drunkenness attended with its Concomitants, mischievous Rencounters, and bloody Broils ; for all that have Arms in their Possession, accoutre themselves with them upon those Occasions.

I HAVE made mention of their Funeral Piles in a former Letter ; but I had once Occasion to take particular Notice

tice of a Heap of Stones, near the Middle of a small Piece of arable Land. The Plough was carefully guided as near to it as possible, and the Pile, being like others I had seen upon the Moors, I ask'd, by an Interpreter, whether there was a Rock beneath it, but being answer'd in the Negative, I further enquir'd the Reasons why they lost so much Ground, and did not remove the Heap? To this I had for Answer, it was a Burial-Place, and they deem'd it a Kind of Sacrilege to remove one single Stone, and that the Children, from their Infancy, were taught the same Veneration for it. Thus a Parcel of loose Stones are more religiously preserv'd among them, than, with us, the costly Monuments in *Westminster-Abby*; and thence I could not but conclude, that the Inclination to preserve the Remains and Memory of the Dead, is greater with those People, than it is among us. The Highlanders, even here in this Town, cannot forego the Practice of the Hills, in raising Heaps of Stones over such as



have lost their Lives by some Misfortune ; for in *Oliver's* Fort, no sooner was the Body of an Officer remov'd from the Place where he fell in a Duel, than they set about the raising such a Heap of Stones upon the Spot where he had lain. So much for Mountain Monuments.

THOSE who are said to have the second Sight, deal chiefly in Deaths, and it is often said to be a Gift peculiar to some Families ; that is, the Cheat has, with some, been handed down from Father to Son. Yet I must confess they seldom fail to be right, when they reveal their Predictions ; for they take the surest Method to prophesise, which is to divulge the Oracle after the Fact. Of this I had once an Opportunity to convince a Highland Gentleman, from whom I thought, might have expected more Reason, and less Prejudice than to be gull'd by such Impostors.

THE Matter was this ; A poor Highlander was drown'd in wading a Ford,  
and

and his Body afterwards put into a small Barn. Not many Days after, the Laird endeavouring to pass the same Water, which was hard by his own House, his Horse gave Way, and he was likewise drown'd, and carried into the same Hut. Soon after, a Story began to pass for current, that such-a-one the *second-sighted*, foretold, when the Body of the poor Man lay expos'd to View, that it would not be long before a greater Man than he should lie in the same Place. This was all that was pretended, and that too was afterwards found to be an Invention arising from the Circumstance of two Persons, at a little Distance of Time, being drown'd in the same Ford, and both their Bodies carried to one Hovel; which indeed stood singly, near the Place where they were both stopp'd by the Rocks.

WITCHES and Goblins are likewise pretty common among the Highlanders, and they have several old Prophecies, handed down to them by Tradition; among which, this is one. That the

Time shall come, when they shall measure out the Cloth of *London* with a long Pole.

As the little Manufacture they had was Cloth, so at the Time, when this pretended Prophecy was broach'd, they esteem'd that the only Riches, and did not know of the Treasure of *Lombard-Street*, like the Country Boy, that fed poorly, and work'd hard; who said, if he were a Gentleman, he would eat fat Bacon, and swing all Day long upon *Gaffer Such-a-one's Yate*.

A CERTAIN Laird, whom I have mention'd several Times before, tho' not by Name, is frequently heard to affirm, that at the Instant he was born, a Number of Swords that hung up in the Hall of the Mansion-House, leap'd of themselves out of the Scabbards, in Token, I suppose, that he was to be a mighty Man in Arms, and this vain Romance seems to be believ'd by the lower Order of his Followers; and I believe there are many that laugh at it in Secret, who dare

dare not publickly declare their Disbelief. But because the Miracle has hitherto only portended the Command of his Clan and an independent Company, he has endeavour'd to supply the Defeat of the Prefage by his own Epitaph, altogether as romantick, in his own Kirk; which he still lives to read, whenever he pleases to gratify his Vanity with the Sight of it.

THEY have an odd Notion relating to dead Bodies that are to be transported over Rivers, Lakes, or Arms of the Sea. Before it is put on Board, they appraise and ascertain the Value of the Boat or Vessel, believing, if that be neglected; some Accident will happen, to endanger the Lives of those who are embarked in it; but upon Recollection, I think some of our Seamen entertain this idle Fancy in some Measure. For I have heard, they don't care for a Voyage with a Corps on Board, as tho' it would be the Occasion of tempestuous Weather.



AND lastly ; for I shall not trouble you longer with Things of this Kind, which are without Number. The Highlanders are of Opinion, that it is in the Power of certain Enchantresses to prevent the Act of Procreation ; but I am rather inclin'd to believe it was originally a Male Artifice among them to serve as an Excuse, in case of Imbecility.

THE Marriages of the Chiefs and Chieftains are, for the most Part, confin'd to the Circuit of the Highlands ; and they generally endeavour to strengthen their Clan, by what they call powerful Alliances. But I must not be understood to include any of the prime Nobility of *Scotland*, of whom there are some Chiefs of Clans. Their Dignity places them quite out of the Reach of any Thing I have said, or have to say, in relation to the Heads of Highland Families, who reside constantly with them, and govern them in Person. As to the lower Class of Gentry, and the ordinary People, they  
generally

generally marry in the Clan, whereto they appertain.

ALL this may be political enough, *i. e.* the Chief to have Regard to the Highlands in general, and his Followers, to their own particular Tribe or Family, in order to preserve themselves a distinct People; but this continues them in a narrow Way of thinking, with Respect to the rest of Mankind, and also prevents that Addition to the Circumstances of the whole, or a Part of the Highlands, which might be made by Marriages of Women of Fortune in the Lowlands. This, in Time, might have a good Effect, by producing an Union instead of that Coldness, to say no more, which subsists at present between the Natives of those two Parts of *Scotland*, as if they bore no relation one to another; considered as Men and Subjects of the same Kingdom, and even the same Part of it. Yet I must here (and by the by) take Notice of one Thing, wherein they perfectly agree, which  
Expe-

Experience has taught me to know perfectly well ; and that is, to grudge and envy those of the South-Part of the Island any profitable Employment among them, altho' they themselves are well received, and equally encourag'd and employ'd with the Natives in that Part of the Kingdom. And I think further, they have sometimes more than their Share, if they must needs keep up such a partial and invidious Distinction.

BUT to return to the Marriages of the Highlanders : Perhaps, after what has been said of the Country, it may be ask'd, what Lowland Woman would care to lead a Life attended with so many Inconveniencies ? Doubtless there are those who would be as fond of sharing the clannish State and Power with a Husband, as some others are of a Name, when they sell themselves for a Title ; for each of these Kinds of Vanity is very flattering. Besides, there are many of the Lowland Women, who seem to

have a great liking to the Highland Men, which they cannot forbear to insinuate in their ordinary Conversation.

BUT such Marriages are very rare, and I know but one Instance of them, which I must confess will not much recommend the Union, of which I have been speaking; but then it is but one, and cannot be the Cause of any general Inference.

A CERTAIN Chieftain took to Wife the Daughter of an *Edinburgh* Goldsmith, but this Lowland Match was the Cause of much Discontent in the Tribe, as being not only a Diminution of the Honour of the House, but, in their Opinion, an ill Precedent besides; and nothing was more common among the People of that Branch of the Clan, than to ask among themselves, Were there not Smiths enough in the Clan that had Daughters? How comes our Chief then to have married the Daughter of a Lowland Smith? making no Distinction between



tween an *Edinburgh* Goldsmith and a Highland Blacksmith.

THEY thought it was a Disgrace, of which every one partook, that he should match himself with a Tradesman's Daughter; a Lowland Woman, and no Way deriv'd from the Tribe.

THIS prov'd in the End to be a fatal Marriage; but as it is uncertain, and therefore would be unjust for me to determine, in a Matter whereof I have not a perfect Knowledge, I can't conclude which of the two, the Husband or the Wife, was the Occasion of the sad Catastrophe. I shall only say what I know; viz. That an old rough Highlander, of sixty at least, was imprisoned at one of the Barracks, while I was there, for accepting Favours from the Lady. She was to be sent to *Edinburgh* to answer the Accusation, and while she was preparing to go, and the Messenger waiting without-Doors, to conduct her thither, *she died.*

THE

THE Clan whereto the abovemention'd Tribe belongs, is the only one I have heard of, which is without a Chief; that is, being divided into Families, under several Chieftains, without any particular Patriarch of the whole Name. And this is a great Reproach, as may appear from an Affair that fell out at my Table in the Highlands, between one of that Name and a *Cameron*. The Provocation given by the latter, was — *Name your Chief*. — The Return to it, at once, was, — *You are a Fool*. They went out the next Morning, but having early Notice of it, I sent a small Party of Soldiers after them; which in all Probability prevented some barbarous Mischief that might have ensued. For the Chieffless Highlander, who is himself a petty Chieftain, was going to the Place appointed, with a small Sword and Pistol; whereas the *Cameron* (an old Man) took with him only his Broad-Sword, according to Agreement.

WHEN

WHEN all was over, and I had, at least, seemingly reconciled them, I was told the Words, of which I seem'd to think but slightly, were to one of that Clan, the greatest of all Provocations.

IN a Bargain between two Highlanders, each of them wets the Ball of his Thumb with his Mouth, and then joining them together, it is esteem'd a very binding Act; but in more solemn Engagements they take an Oath in a Manner, which I shall describe in some succeeding Letter.

WHEN any one of them is arm'd at all Points, he is loaded with a Target, a Fire-lock, a heavy Broad-Sword, a Pistol-Stock, and Lock of Iron, a Dirk; and besides all these, some of them carry a Sort of Knife, which they call a *Skeen-ocles*, from its being conceal'd in the Sleeve near the Arm-pit.]

THIS last is more peculiar to the Robbers, who have done Mischief with it; when

when they were thought to have been effectually disarm'd.

To see a Highlander thus furnish'd out, might put one in mind of *Merry Andrew*, when he comes from behind the Curtain in a warlike Manner, to dispute the Doctor's Right to his *Stage*. He is then in his own individual Person a whole Company of Foot, being loaded with one of every Species of the Arms and Trophies of a Regiment; viz. a Pike, Halbert, Firelock, Sword, Bayonet, Colours and Drum.

SOMETIMES, when a Company of them have previously resolv'd, and agreed to be peaceably and friendly over their *Ufky*, they have drawn their Dirks, and stuck them all into the Table before them; as who should say, nothing but Peace at this Meeting, no private Stabbing to Night. But in promiscuous Companies, at great Assemblies, such as Fairs, Burials, &c. where much Drunkenness prevails, there scarcely ever fails  
to



to be great Riots and much Mischief done among them.

To shoot at a Mark, they lay themselves all along behind some Stone or Hillock, on which they rest their *Piece*, and are a long while taking their Aim; by which Means they can destroy any one unseen, on whom they would wreak their Malice or Revenge.

WHEN in Sight of the Enemy, they endeavour to possess themselves of the higher Ground, as knowing they give their Fire more effectually by their Situation one above another, being without Discipline; and also, that they afterwards descend on the Enemy with greater Force, having in some Measure put it out of their Power to recede in the first Onset.

AFTER their first Fire (I need not have said their first, for they rarely stand a second) they throw away their Fire-Arms and Plaids which incumber them, and make their Attack with their Swords; but

but if repuls'd, they seldom or never rally, but return to their Habitations.

If they happen to engage in a Plain, when they expect the Enemy's Fire; they throw themselves down on the Ground. They had ever a Dread of the Cavalry, and did not care to engage them, tho' but few in Number.

I CHANCED to be in Company one Time with an old Highlander, as I pass'd over the Plain of *Killicranky*, where the Battle was fought between King *William's* Troops, commanded by General *Mackay* and the Rebel Highlanders, under the Earl of *Dundee*.

WHEN we came to the great Stone that is rais'd about the Middle of the Flat, upon the Spot where *Dundee* fell, we stop'd, and there he describ'd to me, in his Manner, the Order and End of the Battle, of which I shall now give you the Substance only; for he was long in telling his Story.

HE told me that *Mackay* extended his Line, which was only two deep, the whole Length of the Plain; designing, as he suppos'd, to surround the Highlanders, if they should descend from the Side of an opposite Hill, where they were posted.

THAT after the first Firing, the Rebels came down six or seven deep, to attack the King's Troops, and their Rear pushing on their Front, they by their Weight, charg'd through and through those feeble Files, and having broke them, made with their Broad-Swords a most cruel Carnage; and many others who expected no Quarter, in order to escape the Highland Fury, threw themselves into that rapid River (the *Tay*) and were drown'd. But he said there was an *English* Regiment, who kept themselves entire. (the only one that was there) whom the Highlanders did not care to attack; and after the Slaughter was over, and the Enemy retir'd,

tir'd, that single *Corps* march'd from the Field in good Order.

HE further told me, there were some few Horſe badly mounted ; who by the Strength and Weight of the Highland Files were puſh'd into the River, which was cloſe in their Rear.

ON any ſudden Alarm and Danger of Diſtreſs to the Chief, he gives Notice of it throughout his own Clan ; and to ſuch others as are in Alliance with him. This is done by ſending a Signal, which they call the *Fiery Croſs*, being two Sticks tied together tranſverſly, and burnt at the Ends ; with this, he ſends Directions in Writing, to ſignify the Place of Rendezvous. And when the principal Perſon of any Place has received this Token, he diſmiſſes the Meſſenger, and ſends it forward to another ; and ſo on, 'till all have received the Intelligence.

UPON the Receipt of this Signal, all that are near, immediately leave their



Habitations, and repair to the Place appointed, with their Arms; and Oatmeal for their Provision. This they mingle with the Water of the next River or Burne they come to, when Hunger calls for a Supply; and often, for Want of a proper Vessel, sup the raw Mixture out of the Palms of their Hands.

THEY have been used, to impose a Tax upon the Inhabitants of the Low Country, near the Borders of the Highlands, call'd *black Mail* (or Rent) and levy it upon them by Force; and sometimes upon the weaker Clans among themselves. But as it was made equally criminal, by several Acts of Parliament, to comply with this Exaction, and to extort it, the People, to avoid the Penalty, came to Agreement with the Robbers, or some of their Correspondents in the Lowlands, to protect their Houses and Cattle. And as long as this Payment was punctually made, the Depredations ceased, or otherwise the Collector of  
this

this Imposition was by Contract oblig'd to make good the Loss, which he seldom fail'd to do.

THESE Collectors gave regular Receipts, as for Safe-guard Money; and those who refused to pay it, were sure to be plunder'd, except they kept a continual Guard of their own, well arm'd, which would have been a yet more expensive Way of securing their Property.

AND notwithstanding the Guard of the independent Highland Companies, which were rais'd chiefly to prevent Thefts and Impositions of this Nature; yet I have been certainly inform'd, that this *black Mail*, or evasive Safe-guard-Money, has been very lately paid in a disarm'd Part of the northern Highlands. And, I make no Doubt, in other Places besides, tho' it has not yet come to my Knowledge.

THE gathering in of Rents is call'd *uplifting* them, and the stealing of Cows they

they call *Lifting*, a soft'ning Word for Theft; as if it were only collecting their Dues. This I have often heard; but it has as often occur'd to me, that we have the Word *Shop-lifting*, in the Sense of stealing, which I take to be an old *Engliff* compound Word. But as to the Etymology of it, I leave that to those who are fond of such unprofitable Disquisitions, tho' I think this is pretty evident.

WHEN a Design is form'd for this Purpose, they go out in Parties from ten to thirty Men, and traverse large Tracts of Mountains, 'till they arrive at the Place where they intend to commit their Depredations; and that they chuse to do as distant as they can from their own Dwellings.

THE principal Time for this wicked Practice is, the *Michaelmas* Moon, when the Cattle are in Condition fit for Markets held on the Borders of the Lowlands. They drive the stolen Cows in the

2 Night-

Night-time, and by Day, they lie conceal'd with them in By-Places among the Mountains, where hardly any others come ; or in Woods, if any such are to be found in their Way.

I MUST here ask Leave to digress a little, and take Notice, that I have several Times used the Word *Cows* for a Drove of Cattle. This is according to the Highland Stile ; for they say, a Drove of Cows, when there are Bulls and Oxen among them, as we say a Flock of Geese, tho' there be in it many Ganders. And having just now mention'd the Time of *Lifting*, it reviv'd in my Memory a malicious Saying of the Lowlanders, viz. That the Highland Lairds tell out their Daughters *Tockers* by the Light of the *Michaelmas* Moon. But to return :

SOMETIMES one Band of these Robbers has agreed with another to exchange the stolen Cattle ; and in this Case, they used to commit their Robberies nearer



Home, and by appointing a Place of Rendezvous, those that *lifted* in the North-East (for the Purpose) have exchanged with others toward the West, and each have sold them not many Miles from Home; which was commonly at a very great Distance from the Place where they were stolen. Nay further, as I have been well inform'd, in making this Contract of Exchange, they have by Correspondence, long before they went out, describ'd to each other the Colour and Marks of the Cows destin'd to be stolen and exchanged.

I REMEMBER a Story concerning a Highland Woman, who, begging a Charity of a Lowland Laird's Lady, was ask'd several Questions; and among the rest, how many Husbands she had had? To which she answer'd Three. And being further question'd, if her Husbands had been kind to her, she said the two first were honest Men, and very careful of their Family; for they both *died for the Law*: That is, were hang'd  
for

for Theft. Well, but as to the last? *Hout ! says she, a fultby Peast ! He dy'd at Hame, lik an auld Dug, on a Puckle o' Strae.*

THOSE that have lost their Cattle, sometimes pursue them by the Track, and recover them from the Thieves. Or if, in the Pursuit, they are *bounded* (as they phrase it) into the Bounds of any other Chief, whose Followers were not concern'd in the Robbery, and the Track is there lost, he is oblig'd by Law to trace them out of his Territory, or make them good to the Owner.

By the Way, the Heath or Heather, being press'd by the Foot, retains the Impression ; or, at least, some remains of it for a long while, before it rises again effectually ; and besides you know, there are other visible Marks left behind by the Cattle. But even a single Highlander has been found by the Track of his Foot, when he took to Hills out of the common Ways, for his greater Safety

in his Flight; as thinking he could not so well be discover'd from Hill to Hill every now and then, as he often might be, in the Road (as they call it) between the Mountains.

IF the Pursuers overtake the Robbers, and find them inferior in Number, and happen to seize any of them, they are seldom prosecuted, there being but few who are in Circumstances fit to support the Expence of a Prosecution; or if they were, they would be liable to have their Houses burnt, their Cattle hock'd, and their Lives put in Danger, from some of the Clan, to which the Banditti belong'd.

BUT with the richer Sort, the Chief or Chieftain generally makes a Composition, when it comes to be well known the Thieves belong'd to his Tribe, which he willingly pays, to save the Lives of some of his Clan; and this is repaid him by a Contribution among the Robbers, who never refuse to do their utmost

utmost to save those of their Fraternity. But it has been said this Payment has been sometimes made in Cows stolen from the opposite Side of the Country, or paid out of the Produce of them, when sold at the Market.

It is certain some of the Highlanders think of this Kind of Depredation, as our Deer-Stealers do of their Park and Forest Enterprizes; that is, to be a small Crime, or none at all. And as the latter would think it a scandalous Reproach to be charg'd with robbing a Hen-Roost, so the Highlander thinks it less shameful to steal a hundred Cows, than one single Sheep; for a Sheep-stealer is infamous even among them.

If I am mistaken in that Part of my Account of the *Lifting* of Cattle, which is beyond my own Knowledge, you may lay the Blame to those Gentlemen who gave me the Information.

BUT there is no more Wonder that Men of Honesty and Probity should disclose,



close, with Abhorrence, the evil Practices of the vile Part of their Countrymen, than that I should confess to them, we have among us a Number of Villains that cannot plead the least Shadow of an Excuse for their Thievings and Highway-Robberies; unless they could make a Pretence of their Idleness and Luxury.

WHEN I first came into these Parts, a Highland Gentleman, in order to give me a Notion of the Ignorance of some of the ordinary Highlanders, and their Contempt of the Lowland Laws (as they call them) gave me an Account, as we were walking together, of the Behaviour of a common Highland Man at his Trial, before the Lords of Justiciary in the Low Country. By the Way, the Appearance of those Gentlemen upon the Bench is not unlike that of our Judges in *England*.

I SHALL repeat the Fellow's Words as near as I can, by writing, in the same broken Accent, as my Highland Friend used in mimicking the Criminal.

THIS

THIS Man was accused of stealing, with others his Accomplices, a good Number of Cattle. And while his Indictment was in reading, setting forth, that he as a common Thief, had lain in wait, &c. the Highlander lost all Patience; and interrupting, cry'd out, *Common Tief, Common Tief! Steal ane Cow, twa Cow dat be Common Tief: Lift hundred Cow, dat be Sbentilmans Trovers.* After the Court was again silent, and some little Progress had been made in the Particulars of the Accusation, he again cry'd out, *Ab! Hone! Dat such fine Sbentilmans should sit dere wid der fine Cowns on, te mak a Parsbel o' Lees on a peur bonesht Mon.*

BUT in Conclusion, when he was told what was to be his Fate, he roar'd out most outrageously, and fiercely pointing at the Judges, he cry'd out, *Ab for a proad Sword an a Tirk, to rid de Hoose o' tose foul Peastes.*

PER-

PERSONAL Robberies are seldom heard of among them. For my own Part, I have several Times, with a single Servant, pass'd the Mountain Way from hence to *Edinburgh*, with four or five hundred Guineas in my Portmanteau, without any Apprehension of Robbers by the Way, or Danger in my Lodgings by Night; tho' in my Sleep any one, with Ease, might have thrust a Sword from the Outside, through the Wall of the Hut and my Body together. I wish we could say as much of our own Country, civiliz'd as it is said to be, tho' one can't be safe in going from *London* to *Highgate*.

INDEED in trifling Matters, as a Knife, or some such Thing, which they have Occasion for, and think it will cause no very strict Enquiry, they are, some of them, apt to pilfer; while a silver Spoon, or a Watch might lie in Safety, because they have no Means to dispose of either, and to make Use of them would soon discover

discover their Theft. But I cannot approve the Lowland Saying, *viz. Shew me a Highlander, and I will shew you a Thief.*

YET after all, I can't forbear doing Justice upon a certain Laird, whose Lady keeps a *Change* far in the Highlands, West of this Town.

THIS Gentleman, one Day, Opportunity tempting, took a Fancy to the Lock of an Officer's Pistol; another Time he fell in Love (like many other Men) with a fair, but deceitful Outside, in taking the Boss of a Bridle silver'd over, to be all of that valuable Metal. 'Tis true, I never lost any Thing at his Hut; but the Proverb made me watchful—I need not repeat it.

BUT let this Account of him be of no Consequence; for I do assure you I never knew any one of his Rank do any Thing like it in all the Highlands.

AND



AND for my own Part, I do not remember that ever I lost any thing among them, but a Pair of new Doe-skin Gloves; and at another Time a Horse-Cloth made of Plaiding, which was taken away, while my Horses were in swimming cross a River; and that was sent me the next Day to *Fort William*, to which Place I was going, when it was taken from the rest of my Baggage, as it lay upon the Ground. I say nothing in this Place of another Robbery, because I know the Motive to it was purely Revenge.

I THOUGHT I had done with this Part of my Subject; but there is just now come to my Remembrance a Passage between an ordinary Highland Man and an Officer in Half-pay, who lives in this Town, and is himself of Highland Extraction.

HE told me, a long while ago, that, on a certain Time, he was going on  
Foot,

Foot, and unattended, upon a Visit to a Laird, about seven or eight Miles among the Hills; and being clad in a new glossy Summer Sute (instead of his Highland Dress, which he usually wore upon such Occasions) there overtook him in his Way, an ordinary Fellow, who forced himself upon him as a Companion.

WHEN they had gone together about a Mile, his new Fellow-Traveller said to him, — *Troth, ye ha gotten bra Clais* — of which the Officer took little Notice; but some Time after, the Fellow began to look sour, and to snort (as they do when they are angry) *Ab! 'tis ponny Geer; what an I shou'd tak 'em frae ye noo?* Upon this, the Officer drew a Pistol from his Breast, and said, — *What do you think of this?*

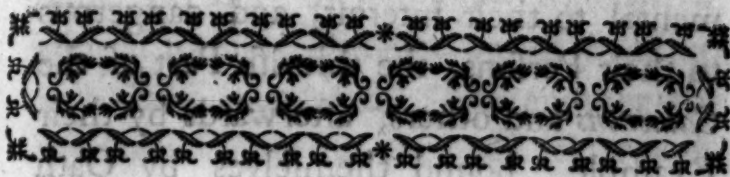
BUT at Sight of the Pistol, the Fellow fell on his Knees, and squall'd out — *Ab hone! Ab hone! She was but shoking.*

IT's true, this Dialogue pass'd in *Irish*; but this is the Language, in which I was told the Story.

BUT I have known several Instances of common Highlanders, who finding themselves like to be worsted, have crouch'd and howl'd like a beaten Spaniel; so suddenly has their Insolence been turn'd into fawning. But, you know, we have both of us seen in our own Country, a Change in higher Life, not less unmanly.

You may see by this additional Article, that I can conceal nothing from you; even tho' it may seem, in some Measure, to call in Question what I had been saying before.

L E T T E R



## LETTER XXIV.



ESIDES tracking the Cows, as mention'd in my last Letter, there was another Means whereby to recover them ; which was, by sending Per-

sons into the Country suspected, and by them offering a Reward (which they call *Tascal Money*) to any who should discover the Cattle, and those who stole them. This, you may be sure, was done as secretly as possible. The Temptation sometimes, tho' seldom proved too strong to be resisted ; and the Cattle being thereby discover'd, a Restitution, or other Satisfaction was obtain'd.



But to put a Stop to a Practice so detrimental to their Interest, and dangerous to their Persons, the thievish Part of the *Camerons* and others, afterwards by their Example, bound themselves by Oath never to receive any such Reward, or inform one against another.

THIS Oath they take upon a drawn Dirk, which they kiss in a solemn Manner; consenting, if ever they prove perjur'd, to be stabb'd with the same Weapon, or any other of the like Sort.

HENCE they think no Wickedness so great as the Breach of this Oath, since they hope for Impunity in committing almost every other Crime, and are so certainly and severely punish'd for this Transgression.

AN Instance of their Severity in this Point happen'd in *December*, 1723, when one of the said *Camerons*, suspected of having taken *Tascal Money*, was in the Dead of the Night, called out of his  
Hut,

Hut, from his Wife and Children ; and under Pretence of some new Enterprize, allured to some Distance out of hearing, and there murdered. And another for the same Crime (as they call it) was either thrown down some Precipice, or otherwise made away with ; for he was never heard of afterwards.

HAVING mention'd, above, the Manner of taking their Oath relating to *Tas-cal Money*, I shall here give you a Specimen of a Highland Oath upon other Occasions. In taking whereof they do not kiss the Book, as in *England* ; but hold up their right Hand, saying thus, or to this Purpose :

“ By God himself, and as I shall answer to God at the great Day, I shall speak the Truth. If I do not, may I never thrive while I live ; may I go to Hell and be damn'd when I die. May my Land neither bear Grass or Corn, may my Wife and Bairns never

R 3 prosper,

“ prosper, may my Cows, Calves, Sheep  
“ and Lambs all perish, &c.”

I SAY to this Purpose; for I never heard they had any established Form of an Oath among them. Besides, you perceive it must necessarily be varied according to the Circumstances of the Person who swears, at the Discretion of him who administers the Oath.

WHEN the Chief was an Encourager of this Kind of Theft, which I have the Charity to believe was uncommon, and the Robbers succeeded in their Attempt, he received two Thirds of the Spoil, or the Produce of it; and the remaining third Part was divided among the Thieves.

THE Clans that had among them the most of Villains addicted to these Robberies, are said, by the People bordering on the Highlands, to be the *Camerons*, *Mackenzies*, the *Broadalbin-men*, the *M'Gregors*, and the *M'Donalds* of *Keppoch*

*Keppoch* and *Glenco*. The Chieftain of these last is said, by his near Neighbours, to have little besides those Depredations for his Support; and the Chief of the first, whose Clan has been particularly stigmatiz'd for those Violences, has, as I am very well inform'd, strictly forbid any such vile Practices, which has not at all recommended him to some of his Followers.

BESIDES these ill-minded People among the Clans, there are some Stragglers in the Hills, who like our Gypsies, have no certain Habitation; only they do not stroll about in Numbers like them. These go singly, and tho' perfectly unknown, do not beg at the Door, but without Invitation or formal Leave, go into a Hut, and sit themselves down by the Fire; expecting to be supply'd with Oatmeal for their present Food. When Bed-time comes, they wrap themselves up in their Plaids, or beg the Use of a Blanket, if any to be spared, for their Covering; and then lay themselves down



upon the Ground, in some Corner of the Hut. Thus the Man and his Wife are often depriv'd of the Freedom of their own Habitation, and cannot be alone together. But the Inhabitants are in little Danger of being pilfered by these Guests; nor, indeed, do they seem to be apprehensive of it. For not only there is generally little to be stolen, but if they took some small Matter, it would be of no Use to the Thief for want of a Receiver; and besides, they would be pursued and easily taken. The People say themselves, if it were not for this Connivance of theirs, by a Kind of customary Hospitality, these Wanderers would soon be starved, having no Money wherewith to purchase Sustenance:

BUT I have heard great Complaint of this Custom from a Highland Farmer, of more than ordinary Substance, at whose Dwelling I happened to see an Instance of this Intrusion; it being very near to the Place where I resided for a Time. And he told me he should  
2 think

think himself happy, if he was taxed at any Kind of reasonable Rate, to be freed from this great Inconvenience.

ABOVE, I have given you a Sketch of the Highland Oath; and here I shall observe to you, how slightly a certain Highlander thought of the Lowland Form.

THIS Man was brought as a Witness against another, in a supposed criminal Case. The Magistrate tendered him the Low Country Oath, and seeing the Fellow addressing himself confidently to take it, tho' he greatly suspected by several Circumstances the Man was suborned, changed his Method, and offered him the Highland Oath. — No, says the Highlander, I cannot do that; for *I will not forswear myself to please any Body.*

THIS single Example might be sufficient to shew how necessary it is to swear the common People, in the Method of their own Country; yet, by Way of  
Chat,

Chat, I shall give you another, tho' it be less different in the Fact than the Expression.

AT Carlisle Assizes a Highland Man, who had meditated the Ruin of another, prosecuted him for Horse-stealing; and swore positively to the Fact.

THIS being done, the supposed Criminal desired his Prosecutor might be sworn in the Highland Manner; and the Oath being tendered him accordingly, he refused it, saying, — *Thar is a Hantle o' Difference betwixt blawing on a Buke and dam'ing one's Saul.*

BUT I have heard of several other Examples of the same Kind, notwithstanding the Oath taken in the Low Country, has the same Introduction, viz. *By God, and as I shall answer, &c.* but then the Land, Wife, Children, and Cattle are not concerned; for there is no Imprecation in it, either upon them, or him that takes the Oath.

As

As most People, when they begin to grow in Years, are unwilling to think themselves incapable of their former Pleasures, so some of the Highland Gentlemen seem to imagine they still retain that exorbitant Power which they formerly exercised over the Lives of their Vassals or Followers ; even without legal Trial and Examination. Of this Power I have heard several of them vaunt, but it might be Ostentation. However, I shall mention one in particular.

I HAPPEN'D to be at the House of a certain Chief, when the Chieftain of a Tribe, belonging to another Clan, came to make a Visit.

AFTER talking of indifferent Matters, I told him I thought some of his People had not behaved toward me, in a particular Affair, with that Civility I might have expected from the Clan. He started ; and immediately with an Air of Fierce-



Fierceness, clapped his Hand to his broad Sword, and told me, if I required it, he would send me two or three of their Heads.

BUT I, really thinking he had been in Jest, and had acted it well (as jesting is not their Talent) laughed out, by Way of Approbation of his Capacity for a Joke; upon which he assumed, if possible, a yet more serious Look, and told me peremptorily, *he was a Man of his Word*, and the Chief, who sat by, made no Manner of Objection to what he had said.

THE heretable Power of *Pit and Gallows*, as they call it, which still is exercised by some within their proper Districts, is, I think, too much for any particular Subject to be intrusted withal. But, it is said, that any Partiality or Revenge of the Chief, in his own Cause, is obviated by the Law; which does not allow him himself to sit judicially; but obliges him to appoint a Substitute as Judge

Judge in his Courts, who is called the *Baily of Regality*.

I FEAR this is but a Shadow of Safety to the accused, if it may not appear to increase the Danger of Injustice and Oppression. For to the Orders and Instructions of the Chief may be added the private Resentment of the *Baily*, which may make up a double Weight against the supposed Criminal.

I HAVE not, I must own, been accustomed to hear Trials in these Courts, but have been often told that one of those Bailies, in particular, seldom examines any, but with raging Words and Rancour: And if the Answers made are not to his Mind, he contradicts them by Blows; and one Time, even to the knocking down of the poor Wretch who was examined. Nay, further, I have heard say of him, by a very credible Person, that a Highlander of a neighbouring Clan, with whom his own has been long at Variance, being to be brought

brought before him, he declared upon the Accufation, before he had feen the Party accufed, *That the very Name fhould hang him.*

I HAVE not mentioned this violent and arbitrary Proceeding, as tho' I knew or thought it ufual in thofe Courts, but to fhew how little Mankind in general are to be trusted with a lawlefs Power, to which there is no other Check or Comp-trol, but good Senfe and Humanity, which are not common enough to re-  
 ftrain every one who is invefted with fuch Power, as appears by this Ex-  
 ample.

THE Baily of Regality, in many Ca-  
 fes, takes upon him the fame State as  
 the Chief himfelf would do : As for  
 one fingle Instance :

WHEN he travels in Time of Snow,  
 the Inhabitants of one Village muft walk  
 before him, to make a Path to the next ;  
 and fo on to the End of his Progreffs.

And in a dark Night they light him from one inhabited Place to another, which are mostly far distant, by carrying blazing Sticks of Fir.

FORMERLY the Power assumed by the Chief, in remote Parts, was perfectly despotick, of which I shall only mention what was told me by a near Relation of a certain attainted Lord, whose Estate (that was) lies in the Northern Highlands: But hold — This Moment, upon Recollection, I have resolved to add to it an Example of the arbitrary Proceeding of one much less powerful than the Chief, who nevertheless thought he might dispose of the Lives of Foreigners at his Pleasure. As to the first; The Father of the late Earl abovementioned having a great Desire to get a Fellow apprehended, who was said to have been guilty of many atrocious Crimes, set a Price upon his Head of one hundred and twenty Crowns (a Species of Scots Coin in those Days) I suppose about Fivepence or Sixpence; and of his own  
Autho-



Authority gave Orders for taking him alive or dead. That the Pursuers thinking it dangerous to themselves to attempt the securing him alive, shot him and brought his Head and one of his Hands to the Chief, and immediately received the promised Reward. The other is as follows;

I REMEMBER to have heard, a good while ago; that in the time when Prince *George of Denmark* was Lord High Admiral of *England*, some *Scots* Gentlemen represented to him; that *Scotland* could furnish the Navy with as good Timber for Masts and other Uses as either *Sweden* or *Norway* could do, and at a much more reasonable Rate.

THIS succeeded so far, that two Surveyors were sent to examine into the Allegations of their Memorial.

THOSE Gentlemen came first to *Edinburgh*, where they stayed some time to concert the rest of their Journey, and to learn

learn from the Inhabitants their Opinion concerning the Execution of their Commission, among whom there was one Gentleman that had some Acquaintance with a certain Chieftain in a very remote Part of the Highlands, and he gave them a Letter to him.

THEY arrived at the Laird's House, declared the Cause of their coming, and produced their Credentials, which were a Warrant and Instructions from the Prince; but the Chieftain, after perusing them, told 'em he knew nothing of any such Person; they then told him he was Husband to Queen *Anne*; and he answered, he knew nothing of either of them; but, says he, there came hither, some time ago, such as you from *Ireland*, as Spies upon the Country, and, we hear, they have made their Jests upon us among the *Irish*.

Now, says he, you shall have one Hour, and if, in that time, you can give me no better Account of yourselves than you have hitherto done, I'll hang you

both upon that Tree. Upon which his Attendants shewed great Readiness to execute his Orders; and in this Perplexity he abruptly left them, without seeing the *Edinburgh* Letter, for of that they made but little Account, since the Authority of the Prince, and even the Queen, were to him of no Consequence: But afterwards, as they were walking backwards and forwards in the Garden, counting the Minutes, one of them resolved to try what the Letter might do; this was agreed to by the other, as the last Resort; but in the Hurry and Confusion they were in, it was not for some time to be found, being worked into a Corner of the Bearer's usual Pocket, and so he passed to another, &c.

Now the Hour is expired, and the haughty Chieftain enters the Garden, and one of them gave him the Letter; this he read, and then turning to them, said, Why did not you produce this at first? If you had not had it I should,

most

most certainly, have hanged you both immediately.

THE Scene being thus changed, he took them into his House, gave them Refreshment, and told them, they might take a Survey of his Woods the next Morning, or when they thought fit.

THERE is one Chief who sticks at nothing to gratify his Avarice or Revenge.

THIS Oppressor, upon the least Offence or Provocation, makes no Conscience of hiring Villains out of another Clan, as he has done several times to execute his diabolical Purposes by *hocking* of Cattle, burning of Houses, and even to commit Murder itself. Out of many Enormities, I shall only mention two.

THE first was, That being offended, though very unreasonably, with a Gentleman, even of his own Name and Clan, he, by horrid Commerce with one who

S 2 governed



governed another Tribe in the Absence of his Chief, agreed with him for a Parcel of Assassins to murder this his Vassal, and bring him, his Head, I suppose, as a Voucher. The Person devoted to Death happened to be absent the Night the Murderers came to his House, and therefore the Villains resolved not to go away empty handed, but to take his Daughter's Head in lieu of his own, which the poor Creature perceiving, was frighted to such a Degree, that she has not recovered her Understanding to this Day.

THE Servant Maid they abused with a Dirk in a butcherly Manner too shameful to be described; to be short, the Neighbours, though at some Distance, hearing the Cries and Shrieks of the Females, took the Alarm, and the inhuman Monsters made their Escape.

THE other Violence related to a Gentleman who lives near this Town, and was appointed Umpire in a litigated Affair

fair by the Chief and the other Party ; and because this Laird thought he could not, with any Colour of Justice, decide in Favour of the Chief, his Cattle, that were not far from his House, were some hocked, and the rest of them killed ; but the Owner of them, as the other, was absent that Night, in all Probability suspecting (or having some private Intelligence of) his Danger ; and when this horrid Butchery was finished, the Ruffians went to his House and wantonly diverted themselves in telling the Servants they had done their Master a good Piece of Service, for they had saved him the Expence of a Butcher to kill his Cattle ; and I have been told, that the next Morning there were seen a Number of Calves sucking at the Dugs of the dead Cows. But two of them were afterwards apprehended and executed.

THESE Men (as is said of *Coleman*) were allured to Secrecy while under Condemnation, though sometimes inclined to confess their Employer ; and thus

they continued to depend upon Promises till the Knot was tied, and then it was too late, but all manner of Circumstances were too flagrant to admit a Doubt concerning the first Instigator of their Wickedness; yet few of the neighbouring Inhabitants dare to trust one another with their Sentiments of it.

BUT here comes the finishing Stroke to the first of these execrable Pieces of Workmanship.

NOT long after the vile Attempt, he who had furnished the Murderers, made a Demand on the Chief, of a certain Quantity of Oatmeal, which was to be the Price of the Assassination, but in Answer, he was told, if he would send Money, it might be had of a Merchant with whom he (the Chief) had frequent Dealings, and as for himself he had but just enough for his own Family 'till the next Crop.

THIS

THIS shuffling Refusal occasioned the Threats of a Law-suit, but the Demander was told; the Business had not been effectually performed; and besides, as he knew the *Consideration* he might commence his Process, and declare it in a Court as soon as ever he thought fit.

THIS last Circumstance I did not, or perhaps could not, know 'till lately, when I was in that Part of the Highlands from whence the Vilains were hired.

I MUST again apologize, and say, I make no Doubt you will take this Account (as it is intended) to be a Piece of historical Justice done upon one who is lawless, and deserves much more; and not as a Sample of a Highland Chief, or the least Imputation on any other of those Gentlemen.

YET Truth obliges me to confess, that in some Parts there remains among the



Natives a kind of *Spanish*, or *Italian* Inclination to revenge themselves, as it were, by Proxy, of those whom they think have injured them, or interfered with their Interest. This I could not but infer soon after my first Coming to the western Part of the Highlands, from the Saying of a Youth, Son of a Laird in the Neighbourhood.

HE was telling me, his Father's Estate had been much embarrassed, but by a lucky Hit a part of it was redeemed. I was desirous to know by what Means, and he proceeded to tell me, there were two *Wadsets* upon it, and both of the Mortgagees had been in Possession, each claiming a Right to about half, but one of them being a Native, and the other a Stranger, that is, not of the Clan, the former had taken the latter aside, and told him, if he did not immediately quit the Country he would hang him upon the next Tree. What! says a Highlander who was born in the East, and went with me into those Parts; that would

would be the way to be hanged himself. Out ! says the Youth, you talk as if you did not know your own Country ; *That would have been done, and no-body know who did it* ; this he spoke with an Air, as if he had been talking of ordinary Business, and was angry with the other for being ignorant of it, who afterwards owned, that my Presence was the Cause of his Objection.

BESIDES, what I have recounted in this Letter, which might serve as an Indication that some, at least, of the ordinary Highlanders are not averse to the Price of Blood ; I shall here take notice of a Proposal of that kind, which was made to myself.

HAVING given the Preference to a certain Clan in a profitable Business, it brought upon me the Resentment of the Chieftain of a small neighbouring Tribe, Part of a Clan at Enmity with the former.

THIS

THIS Gentleman thought his People had as much Right to my Favour, in that Particular, as the others; the first Instance of his Revenge was a Robbery committed by one of his Tribe, whom I ordered to be *bounded out*, and he was taken. This Fellow I resolved to prosecute to the utmost, which brought the Chieftain to solicit me in his Behalf.

HE told me, for Introduction, that it was not usual in the Hills for *Gentlemen* to carry such Matters to Extremity, but rather to accept of a Composition, and finding their Custom of compounding had no Weight with me, he offered a Restitution, but I was firmly resolved, *in terrorem*, to punish the Thief. Seeing this Proposal was likewise ineffectual, he told me the Man's Wife was one of the prettiest young Women in the Highlands, and if I would pardon the Husband, I should *have her*.

I TOLD

I TOLD him, that was an agreeable Bribe, yet it could not prevail over the Reasons I had to refer the Affair to Justice.

SOME time after, a Highlander came privately to me, and, by my own Interpreter, told me he heard I had a Quarrel with the Laird of ———, and if that was true, he thought *he had lived long enough*; but not readily apprehending his Intention, I asked the Meaning of that dubious Expression, and was answered, he would kill him for me if I would encourage it. The Proposal really surprized me, but soon recovering myself, I ordered him to be told; that I believed he was a trusty honest Man, and if I had Occasion for such Service, I should employ *him* before any other; but it was the Custom in my Country, when two Gentlemen had a Quarrel, to go into the Field and decide it between themselves.

AT



AT the Interpretation of this last Part of my Speech, he shook his Head and said; *What a foolish Custom is that!*

PERHAPS this Narration, as well as some others that have preceded, may be thought to consist of too many Circumstances, and consequently to be of an unnecessary Length, but I hope there are none that do not, by that Means, convey the Knowledge of some Custom or Inclination of the People, which otherwise might have been omitted; besides, I am myself, as you know very well, an Enemy to long Stories,

SOME of the Highland Gentlemen are immoderate Drinkers of Usky, even three or four Quarts at a Sitting; and in general, the People that can pay the Purchase, drink it without Moderation.

NOT long ago, four *English* Officers took a Fancy to try their Strength in this Bow of *Ulysses*, against a like Number of  
 3 the

the Country Champions, but the Enemy came off victorious ; and one of the Officers was thrown into a Fit of the Gout, without Hopes ; another had a most dangerous Fever, a third lost his Skin and Hair by the Surfeit, and the last confessed to me, that when Drunkenness and Debate run high, he took several Opportunities to sham it.

THEY say for Excuse, the Country requires a great deal ; but I think they mistake a Habit and Custom for Necessity. They likewise pretend it does not intoxicate in the Hills as it would do in the low Country, but this also I doubt by their own Practice ; for those among them who have any Consideration will hardly care so much as to refresh themselves with it, when they pass near the Tops of the Mountains ; for in that Circumstance, they say, it renders them careless, listless of the Fatigue, and inclined to sit down, which might invite to Sleep, and then they would be in Danger to perish with Cold. I have been tempted

ed to think this Spirit has in it, by Infusion, the Seeds of Anger, Revenge and Murder (this I confess is a little too poetical) but those who drink of it to any Degree of Excess behave, for the most Part, like true Barbarians, I think much beyond the Effect of other Liquors. The Collector of the Customs at *Stornway* in the Isle of *Lewis* told me, that about 120 Families drink yearly 4000 *English* Gallons of this Spirit, and Brandy together, although many of them are so poor they cannot afford to pay for much of either, which you know must encrease the Quantity drank by the rest, and that they frequently give to Children of six or seven Years old, as much at a time as an ordinary Wine-glass will hold.

WHEN they chuse to qualify it for Punch they sometimes mix it with Water and Honey, or with Milk and Honey; at other times the Mixture is only the *Aqua Vitæ*, Sugar and Butter, this they burn till the Butter and Sugar are dissolved.

THE

THE Air of the Highlands is pure and consequently Healthy, insomuch that I have known such Cures done by it as might be thought next to Miracles, I mean in Distempers of the Lungs as Coughs, Consumptions, &c.

AND as I have mentioned the Honey above, I shall here give that its due Commendation; I think then, it is in every respect as good as that of *Minorca* so much esteemed, and both, I suppose, are, in a great Measure, produced from the Bloom of the Heath; for which Reason too our *Hampshire* Honey is more valued than any from other Parts near *London*, because that County is mostly covered with Heath.

As the Lowlanders call their Part of the Country the Land of Cakes, so the Natives of the Hills say they inhabit a Land of Milk and Honey.

P. S.



P. S. In the Low-Country the Cakes are called *Cookies*, and the several Species of them, of which there are many, though not much differing in Quality one from another, are *dignified* and distinguished by the Names of the reigning Toasts, or the good Housewife, who was the Inventor; as for Example; Lady *Cullen's Cookies*, &c.





## LETTER XXV.



IN a former Letter, I ventured to give it you as my Opinion, that Mankind in different Countries are naturally the same. I shall now send you a short Sketch of what I have observed in the Conversation of an *English* Fox-hunter, and that of a Highland Laird, supposing neither of them to have had a liberal and polite Education, or to have been far out of their own Counties.

THE first of these Characters is, I own, too trite to be given you, but this By-Way of Comparison.

THE 'Squire is proud of his Estate, and Affluence of Fortune, loud and positive over his *October*, impatient of Contradiction, or rather will give no Opportunity for it; but Whoops and Hollows at every Interval of his own Talk, as if the Company were to supply the Absence of his Hounds.

THE particular Characters of the Pack, the various Occurrences in a Chace, where *Jowler* is the eternal Hero, make the constant Topick of his Discourse, tho' perhaps none others are interested in it. And his Favourites the Trencher-Hounds, if they please, may lie undisturbed upon Chairs and Counterpanes of Silk; and upon the least Cry, tho' not hurt, his Pity is excited more for them, than if one of his Children had broke a Limb, and to that Pity his Anger succeeds to the Terror of the whole Family.

THE Laird is national, vain of the Number of his Followers, and his absolute

lute Command over them. In case of Contradiction, he is loud and imperious, and even dangerous; being always attended by those who are bound to support his arbitrary Sentiments.

THE great Antiquity of his Family, and the heroick Actions of his Ancestors, in their Conquests upon Enemy Clans, is the inexhaustible Theme of his Conversation; and, being accustomed to Dominion, he imagines himself, in his *Uky*, to be a sovereign Prince. And, as I said before, fancies he may dispose of Heads at his Pleasure.

THUS, one of them places his Vanity in his Fortune, and his Pleasure in his Hounds. The other's Pride is in his Lineage, and his Delight is Command, both arbitrary in their Way; and this the Excess of Liquor discovers in both. So that what little Difference there is between them, seems to arise from the Accident of their Birth; and if the Exchange of Countries had been made in



their Infancy, I make no Doubt but each might have had the other's Place, as they stand separately described in this Letter.

ON the contrary, in like Manner, as we have many Country Gentlemen, merely such, of great Humanity and agreeable, if not general, Conversation; so in the Highlands I have met with some Lairds, who surprized me with their good Sense and polite Behaviour, being so far removed from the more civilized Part of the World, and considering the Wildness of the Country, which one would think was sufficient, of itself, to give a savage Turn to a Mind the most humane.

THE Isles to the North-West, and to the North of the *main Land* (if I may so speak of this our Island) may not improperly be called Highlands; for they are mountainous, and the Natives speak the Language, follow the Customs, and wear the Habit of the Highlanders.

IN

IN some of the Western Islands (as well as in Part of the Highlands) the People never rub out a greater Quantity of Oats than what is just necessary for Seed, against the following Year; the rest they reserve in the Sheaves for their Food. And, as they have Occasion, set Fire to some of them; not only to dry the Oats, which, for the most Part, are wet, but to burn off the Husk. Then, by winnowing they separate, as well as they can, the sooty Part from the Grain; but as this cannot be done effectually, the *Bonnack* or Cake they make of it, is very black. Thus they deprive themselves of the Use of Straw, leaving none to thatch their Huts, make their Beds, or feed their Cattle in the Winter Season.

THEY seldom burn and grind a greater Quantity of these Oats, than serves them for a Day, except on a *Saturday*; when some will prepare a double Portion, that they may have nothing to do on the

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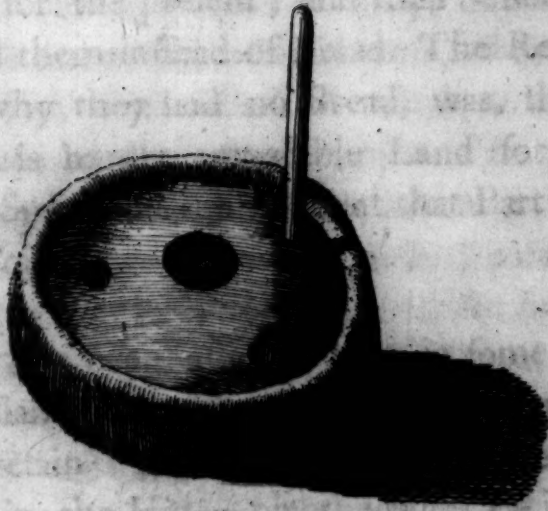
*Sunday*

Sunday following. This Oatmeal is called *Graydon Meal*.

FOR grinding the Oats, they have a Machine they call a *Quarn*. This is composed of two Stones; the undermost is about a Foot and a Half, or two Feet Diameter. It is round, and five or six Inches deep in the Hollow, like an earthen Pan. Within this they place another Stone, pretty equal at the Edge to that Hollow. This last is flat, like a wooden Pot-*led*, about three or four Inches thick, and in the Centre of it is a pretty large round Hole, which goes quite through, whereby to convey the Oats between the Stones; there are also two or three Holes in different Places, near the extreme Part of the Surface, that go about Half-way through the Thickness, which is just Depth enough to keep a Stick in its Place, by which, with the Hand, they turn it round and round, till they have finished the Operation. But in a wild Part of *Argyleshire*, there was no Bread of any Kind,  
till

Vol. II.

which passed down, and in *page 78*





and the King. This is the only one of the  
 kind that has been found.

For the purpose of the King, they have  
 made a new one. This is  
 composed of a piece of wood and a piece of metal.

The wood is a piece of oak and the metal is a piece of iron. The wood is cut into a shape like a bowl and the metal is cut into a shape like a lid.

The lid is placed on the bowl and the whole is held together by a piece of string. The string is made of a piece of wood and a piece of metal.

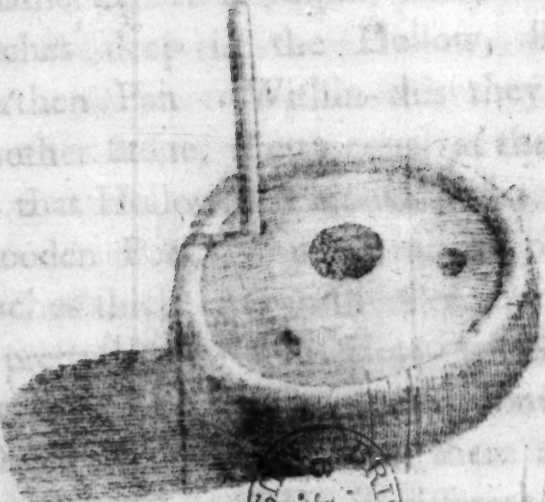
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The wood is a piece of oak and the metal is a piece of iron. The wood is cut into a shape like a bowl and the metal is cut into a shape like a lid.



till the Discovery of some Lead Mines, which brought Strangers among the Inhabitants; who before fed upon the Milk of their Cows, Goats, and Sheep. In Summer they used to shake their Milk in a Vessel, till it was very frothy, which puffed them up, and satisfied them for the present; and their Cheese served them instead of Bread. The Reason why they had no Bread, was, that there is hardly any arable Land for a great Space, all round about that Part of the Country.

I HAVE been assured, that in some of the Islands, the meaner Sort of People still retain the Custom of boiling their Beef in the Hide; or otherwise (being destitute of Vessels of Metal or Earth) they put Water into a Block of Wood, made hollow by the Help of the Dirk and burning; and then with pretty large Stones heated red-hot, and successively quenched in that Vessel, they keep the Water boiling, till they have dressed their Food. It is said, likewise, that

they roast a Fowl in the Embers, with the Guts and Feathers; and when they think it done enough, they strip off the Skin, and then think it fit for the Table.

A GENTLEMAN of my Acquaintance told me, that in coming from *Ireland* to the Western Highlands, he was reduced by an Ague, to the Necessity of landing upon the Island *Macormach*; and arriving at the publick *Change*, he observed three Quarters of a Cow to lie in a shallow Part of the Salt Water, and the other Quarter hanging up against the End of the Hut.

THAT, asking the Reason of it, he was told they had no Salt; and it was their Way of preserving their Beef.

Some Time after, the Woman of the Hut (or the *guid Wife*) took a Side of a Calf that had been taken out of the Cow, and holding it by the Legs, waved it backward and forward over the Fire, till

till Part of it was roasted, as she thought ; and then tore off one of the Limbs, and offered it to him to eat. A tempting Dish ! especially for a sick Stomach !

It is often said, that some of the Lairds of those Islands take upon them the State of Monarchs ; and thence their Vassals have a great Opinion of their Power.

AMONG other Stories told of them, there is one pretty well known in the North of *Scotland* ; but whether true, or feigned as a Ridicule upon them, I do not know. For, notwithstanding the Lowland *Scots* complain of the *English* for ridiculing other Nations, yet they themselves have a great Number of standing Jokes upon the Highlanders.

THEY say a *Spanish* Ship being stranded upon the Coast of *Barra* (a very small Island to the South of *Lewes*) the Chief (*M<sup>r</sup> Neil*) called a Council out of his Followers (which I think they say  
were



were about fifty in Number) in order to determine what was to be done with her. That in the Course of the Consultation one of the Members proposed, “ If she  
“ was laden with Wine and Brandy, she  
“ should be confiscated as an illicit Tra-  
“ der upon the Coast ; but if she was  
“ freighted with other Merchandize,  
“ they should plunder her as a Wreck.”

UPON this, one of the Council, more cautious than the rest, objected, that the King of *Spain* might resent such Treatment of his Subjects ; but the other replied, We have nothing to do with that. *M<sup>r</sup> Neal and the King of Spain will adjust that Matter between themselves.*

As this is a cold Country, the People endeavour to avail themselves of the Condition of those who live in a more northern Climate.

THEY tell you, that some of the Lairds in the Islands of *Schetland* (which are far North of the *Orkneys*) hire a Domestic

mestick by the half Year, or by the Quarter, just as they can agree, whose Business it is to put an Instrument in Order, when the Laird has an Inclination to play upon it; but if he attempts to play a Tune himself, he is sure to be discarded.

OF this they give you an Instance in a certain Laird, who observing his Servant went farther toward an *Air*, than he ought to have done by Agreement, (perhaps vainly imagining he could play better than his Master) he had Warning given him to provide himself with another Service, against the next *Martinmas*, which was then about two Months to come. And altho' the Man was not suspended in the mean Time from the Exercise of his Function, (because he was to be paid for the whole Time) yet in all that Interval, no Manner of Intercession could prevail with the Laird to continue him in his Service beyond that Quarter. No; notwithstanding his own Lady strongly solicited him

in Behalf of the poor unhappy Offender ; nor could she obtain so much as a Certificate in his Favour.

HERE you will say, all this must be a Riddle : And, indeed, so it is. But your Friend Sir *Alexander*, or any other of your *Scots* Acquaintance, can explain it to you much better over a Bottle, or walking in St. *James's* Park, than I can do upon Paper. They can likewise give you the Title of the *Hireling*, which I have forgot ; and when all that is done, I dare venture to say, you will conclude, there is no Occasion for any such Officer in any *English* Family. And for my own Part, I really think there is as little Need of him any where on this Side the *Tweed*, within the Compass of the Ocean.

WE had the other Day, in our Coffee-Room an Auction of Books, if such Trash, and so small a Number of them may go by that Name.

ONE of them I purchased, which I don't remember to have ever heard of before ; altho' it was published so long ago as the Year 1703.

It is a Description of the Western Islands of *Scotland*, and came extremely *à propos*, to prevent my saying any Thing further concerning them.

I HAVE nothing to object against the Author's (Mr. *Martin's*) Account of those Isles, with Respect to their Situation, Mountains, Lakes, Rivers, Caves, &c. For I confess I never was in any one of them, tho' I have seen several of them from the main Land. But I must observe, that to furnish out his Book with much of the *Wonderful* (a Quality necessary to all Books of Travels, and it would be happy if History were less tainted with it) he recounts a great Variety of strange Customs used by the Natives (if ever in Use) in Days of yore, with many other Wonders ; among  
all



all which the *second Sight* is the superlative.

THIS, he says, is a Faculty, Gift, or Misfortune (for he mentions it under those three Predicaments) whereby all those who are possessed of it, or by it, see the perfect Images of absent Objects, either human, brute, vegetable, artificial, &c. And if there be fifty other Persons in the same Place, those Sights are invisible to them all. Nor even are they seen by any one, who has himself at other Times the *second Sight*, unless the Person who has the Faculty, at that Instant, should touch him with Design to communicate it to him.

IT is not peculiar to adult Persons, but is sometimes given to young Children. Women have this supernatural Sight, and even Horses and Cows. 'Tis Pity he does not tell us how those two Kinds of Cattle distinguish between natural and preternatural Appearances, so

as to be fearless of the one, and affrighted at the other ; tho' seemingly the same, and how all this came to be known.

UPON this Subject he employs six and thirty Pages, *i. e.* a small Part of them in recounting what Kind of Appearances forebode Death, which of them are Pre-sages of Marriage, &c. as tho' it were a settled System.

The remaining Leaves are taken up, in Examples of such prophetick Apparitions, and the Certainty of their Events.

BUT I shall trouble you no further with so contemptible a Subject, or myself with pointing out the Marks of Imposture, except to add one Remark, which is, that this ridiculous Notion has almost excluded another, altogether as weak and frivolous ; for he mentions only two or three slight Suspicions of *Witchcraft*, but not one Fact of that Nature throughout his whole Book. Yet both this and second Sight are sprung  
from

from one and the same Stock, which I suppose to be very ancient, as they are Children of *Credulity*, who was begotten by *Superstition*, who was the Offspring of *Craft*; but you must make out the next Ancestor yourself, for his Name is torn off from the Pedigree, but I believe he was the Founder of the Family.

IN looking upwards to what I have been writing, I have paused a while to consider what it was that could induce me to detain you so long about this trifling Matter; and at last I have resolved it into a Love of Truth, which is naturally communicative, and makes it painful to conceal the Impositions of Falsehood. But these Islands are so remote and unfrequented, they are a very proper Subject for Invention; and few, I think, would have the Curiosity to visit them, in order to disprove any Account of them, however romantick.

I CAN make no other Apology for the Length of this Detail, because I might  
have

have gone a much shorter Way, by only mentioning the Book, and hinting its Character; and so leaving it to your Choice, whether to take Notice of it, or reject it.

THIS Letter will bring you the Conclusion of our *Correspondence*, so far as it relates to this Part of our Island; yet if any Thing should happen hereafter that may be thought qualified to go upon its Travels five hundred Miles Southward, it will be a Pleasure to me to give it the necessary Dispatch.

I HAVE called it *Correspondence* from the Remarks I have received from you, upon such Passages in my Letters as gave you the Occasion; and I wish my Subject would have enabled me to give you Opportunities to increase their Number.

WRITERS, you know, for the most Part have not been contented with any thing less than the Characters and Actions of those whom Birth or Fortune



had set up to publick View; or the Policy or Weakness of publick Councils. The Order and Event of Battles, Sieges, and such like, in great Measure dressed up in Habits cut out by themselves, but the Genius of a People has been thought beneath their Notice.

THIS, forsooth, is called supporting the Dignity of History. Now in this Case, who shall condescend to give a Detail of Circumstances, generally esteemed to be low, and therefore of little Consequence, and at the same Time escape the Character of a Trifler?

BUT I am unwarily fallen into an Apology to you, and not as if I was writing *en Confidence* to a Friend, but openly to the whole Kingdom.

FOR my own Part (who have already lived too long to be dazzled with glittering Appearances) I should be as well pleased to see a Shepherd of *Arcadia* (free from poetical Fiction) in his rustick

rustick Behaviour and little Oeconomy ;  
 or a Burgher of ancient *Rome* in his  
 Shop, as to know the Character of a  
 Consul ; for in either Case, it is the  
 Comparison of pass'd Ages, and foreign  
 Countries oppos'd to our own, that ex-  
 cites my Curiosity, and gives me Sa-  
 tisfaction.

As we are now about to settle our Ac-  
 counts to this Time, I shall acknowledge  
 (as every honest Man would do) the  
 Value of an Article, which, it is likely  
 you make little Account of, as the  
*Indians* are said to have done of their  
 Gold, when they gave it away for Bau-  
 bles. And that is, the agreeable Amuse-  
 ment you have furnished me with from  
 Time to Time, concerning such Passa-  
 ges as could not, for good Reasons, be  
 admitted to the publick Papers. This  
 to one almost excluded the World may,  
 in some Measure, be said to restore him  
 to his native Home.

UPON the whole, when all the Articles in your Favour are brought to Account, I think the Balance will be on your Side; and yet I make no Doubt you would chearfully go on to increase the Debt, tho' I should become a Bankrupt, and there did not remain to you the least Expectation of Payment from, &c.



LETTER



## LETTER XXVI.

Concerning the new Roads, &c.

173—



It is now about eight Years since I sent you the Conclusion of my rambling Account of the Highlands ; and perhaps you would not have complained, if in this long Interval, you had been perfectly free of so barren a Subject.

MONSIEUR *Fontenelle*, I remember, in one of his pastoral Dialogues makes a Shepherd object to another. *Quoi ! tou-*

U 3

*jours*



*jours de l'Amour*? And I think you may as well ask — What? always Highlands? But in my Situation, without them, I should be in the sorrowful Condition of an old Woman in her Country Cottage, by a Winter-Fire; and nobody would hearken to her Tales of Witches and Spirits; that is, to have little or nothing to say. But now I am a perfect Volunteer, and cannot plead my former Excuses, and really am without any Apprehensions of being thought officious in giving you some Account of the Roads, which within these few Weeks have been compleatly finished.

THESE new Roads were begun in the Year 1726, and have continued about eleven Years in the Prosecution; yet, long as it may be thought, if you were to pass over the whole Work (for the Borders of it would shew you what it was) I make no Doubt but that Number of Years would diminish in your Imagination to a much shorter Tract of

3

Time,

Time, by Comparison with the Difficulties that attended the Execution.

BUT before I proceed to any particular Descriptions of them, I shall inform you how they lie, to the End you may trace them out upon a Map of *Scotland*. And first I shall take them as they are made, to enter the Mountains, viz.

ONE of them begins from *Crief*, which is about fourteen Miles from *Sterling*. Here the *Romans* left off their Works, of which some Parts are visible to this Day; particularly the Camp at *Ardoch*, where the Vestiges of the Fortifications are on a Moor, so barren, that its whole Form has been safe from Culture, or other Alteration besides Weather and Time.

THE other Road enters the Hills at *Dimbeld* in *Athol*, which is about ten Miles from *Pertb*.

THE first of them, according to my Account, tho' the last in Execution, proceeds through *Glenalmond* (which for

its Narrowness and the Height of the Mountains, I remember to have mentioned formerly) and thence it goes to *Aberfaldy*. There it crosses the River *Tay*, by a Bridge of Free-Stone, consisting of five spacious Arches; (by the Way, this military Bridge is the only Passage over that wild and dangerous River) and from thence the Road goes on to *Dalnachardoch*.

THE other Road from *Dunkeld* proceeds by the *Blair* of *Atbol*, to the said *Dalnachardoch*.

HERE the two Roads join in one, and as a single Road it leads on to *Dalwhinny*, where it branches out again into two; of which one proceeds toward the North-West, through *Garva-Moor*, and over the *Coriarach Mountain* to *Fort Augustus*, at *Killichumen*, and the other Branch goes due North to the Barrack of *Ruthven* in *Badenoch*, and thence by *Delmagary* to *Inverness*. From thence it proceeds something to the Southward of the West across the Island, to the afore-said

said *Fort Augustus*, and so on to *Fort-William* in *Lochabber*.

THE Length of all these Roads put together, is about 250 Miles.

I HAVE so lately mentioned *Glenalmond* in the Road from *Crief* Northward, that I cannot forbear a Digression, tho' at my first setting out, in relation to a Piece of Antiquity, which happened to be discovered in that Vale, not many Hours before I passed through it, in one of my Journeys Southward.

A SMALL Part of the Way through this *Glen* having been marked out by two Rows of Camp-Colours placed at a good Distance one from another, whereby to describe the Line of the intended Breadth and Regularity of the Road, by the Eye, there happened to lie directly in the Way an exceeding large Stone; and as it had been made a Rule from the Beginning to carry on the Roads in streight Lines, as far as the Way would permit,



permit, not only to give them a better Air, but to shorten the Passenger's Journey, it was resolved the Stone should be removed, if possible, tho' otherwise the Work might have been carried along on either Side of it.

THE Soldiers, by vast Labour, with their Leavers and Jacks, or Hand-screws, tumbled it over and over, till they got it quite out of the Way, altho' it was of such an enormous Size, that it might be Matter of great Wonder how it could ever be removed by human Strength and Art; especially to such who had never seen an Operation of that Kind. And upon their digging a little Way into that Part of the Ground, where the Centre of the Base had stood, there was found a small Cavity about two Feet square, which was guarded from the outward Earth at the Bottom, Top, and Sides, by square flat Stones.

THIS Hollow contained some Ashes, Scraps of Bones, and half-burnt Ends  
of

of Stalks of Heath ; which last we concluded to be a small Remnant of a Funeral-Pile. Upon the whole, I think there is no Room to doubt, but it was the Urn of some considerable *Roman* Officer, and the best of the Kind that could be provided in their military Circumstance; and that it was so, seems plainly to appear from its Vicinity to the *Roman* Camp, the Engines that must have been employed to remove that vast Piece of a Rock, and the Unlikeliness it should, or could have ever been done by the Natives of the Country. But certainly the Design was, to preserve those Remains from the Injuries of Rains, and melting Snows, and to prevent their being profaned by the sacrilegious Hands of those they called Barbarians, for that reproachful Name you know they gave to the People of almost all Nations but their own.

GIVE me leave to finish this Digression, which is grown already longer than I foresaw, or intended.

As

As I returned the same Way from the Lowlands, I found the Officer with his Party of working Soldiers not far from the *Stone*, and asked him what was become of the *Urn*?

To this he answered, that he had intended to preserve it in the Condition I left it, till the Commander in Chief had seen it as a Curiosity; but that it was not in his Power so to do, for soon after the Discovery was known to the Highlanders, they assembled from distant Parts, and having formed themselves into a Body, they carefully gathered up the Relics, and marched with them in solemn Procession to a new Place of Burial, and there discharged their Fire-Arms over the Grave, as supposing the Deceased had been a military Officer.

You will believe the Recital of all this Ceremony led me to ask the Reason of such Homage done to the Ashes of a Person, supposed to have been dead almost

most two thousand Years. It did so; and the Officer, who is himself a Native of the Hills, told me, that they (the Highlanders) firmly believe, that if a dead Body should be known to lie above Ground, or be disinterred by Malice, or the Accidents of Torrents of Water, &c. and Care was not immediately taken to perform to it the proper Rites, then there would arise such Storms and Tempests as would destroy their Corn, blow away their Huts, and all Sorts of other Misfortunes would follow, till that Duty was performed. You may here recollect what I told you so long ago of the great Regard the Highlanders have for the Remains of their Dead; but this Notion is entirely *Roman*.

BUT to return to my main Purpose: In the Summer Seasons, 500 of the Soldiers from the Barracks, and other Quarters about the Highlands, were employed in those Works in different Stations, by Detachments from the Regiments and Highland Companies.



THE private Men were allowed Sixpence a Day, over and above their Pay as Soldiers: A Corporal had Eight-pence, and a Serjeant a Shilling; but this Extra-Pay was only for working Days, which were often interrupted by violent Storms of Wind and Rain, from the Heights and Hollows of the Mountains.

THESE Parties of Men were under the Command and Direction of proper Officers, who were all Subalterns, and received two Shillings and Sixpence *per Diem*, to defray their extraordinary Expence in building Huts, making necessary Provision for their Tables from distant Parts; unavoidable, tho' unwelcome Visits, and other Incidents arising from their wild Situation.

I SHOULD have told you before, that the non-commissioned Officers were constant and immediate Overseers of the Works.

THE

THE Standard-Breadth of these Roads, as laid down at the first Projection, is sixteen Feet; but in some Parts, where there were no very expensive Difficulties, they are wider.

IN those Places (as I have said before) they are carried on in straight Lines, till some great Necessity has turned them out of the Way; the rest which run along upon the Declivities of Hills, you know, must have their Circuits, Risings, and Descents accordingly.

To stop and take a general View of the Hills before you, from an Eminence, in some Part where the Eye penetrates far within the void Spaces, the Roads would appear to you in a Kind of whimsical Disorder; and as those Parts of them that appear to you, are of a very different Colour from the Heath that chiefly cloaths the Country, they may by that Contrast be traced out to a considerable Distance.

Now

Now let us suppose, that where you are, the Road is visible to you for a short Space, and is then broke off to the Sight, by a Hollow or Winding among the Hills; beyond that Interruption the Eye catches a small Part on the Side of another Hill, and some again on the Ridge of it; in another Place farther off the Road, appears to run Ziczag, in Angles, up a steep Declivity. In one Place, a short horizontal Line shews itself below, in another the Marks of the Road seem to be almost even with the Clouds, &c.

It may here be objected — How can you see any Part of the flat Roof of a Building, when you are below? The Question would be just, but the Edges of the Roads on a Precipice, and the broken Parts of the Face of the Mountain behind, that has been wrought into, to make Room for the Road; these appear, and discover to those who are below, the Line of which I have been speaking.

THUS

THUS the Eye catches one Part of the Road here, another there, in different Lengths and Positions ; and according to their Distance they are diminished and rendered fainter and fainter, by the lineal and aerial Perspective, till they are entirely lost to Sight. And I need not tell you, that as you pursue your Progress, the Scene changes to new Appearances.

THE old Ways (for Roads I shall not call them) consisted chiefly of stony *Moors*, *Bogs*, rugged rapid *Fords*, *Declivities* of Hills ; entangling *Woods* and giddy *Precipices*. You will say this is a dreadful Catalogue to be read to him that is about to take a Highland Journey.

I HAVE not mentioned the Valleys, for they are few in Number, far divided asunder ; and generally the Roads through them were easily made.

MY Purpose now is to give you some Account of the Nature of the particular



Parts abovementioned, and the Manner how this extraordinary Work has been executed, and this I shall do in the Order I have ranged them as above.

AND first, the *Stony Moors* ; these are mostly Tracts of Ground of several Miles in Length, and often very high, with frequent lesser Risings and Descents, and having for Surface a Mixture of Stones and Heath. The Stones are fixed in the Earth, being very large and unequal, and generally are as deep in the Ground as they appear above it, and where there are any Spaces between the Stones there is a loose spongy Sward, perhaps not above five or six Inches deep, and incapable to produce any thing but Heath, and all beneath it is hard Gravel or Rock.

I now begin to be apprehensive of your Memory, lest it should point out some Repetitions of Descriptions contained in my former Letters ; but I have been thus particular, because I know the Extent of your Journeys, and that with  
you

you a Morass is called a Moor; yet Hills that are something of this Nature are called Moors in the North of *England*.

Here the Workmen first made room to fix their Instruments, and then, by Strength, and the Help of those two mechanic Powers, the *Screw* and the *Leaver* they raised out of their ancient Beds those massive Bodies, and then filling up the Cavities with Gravel, set them up mostly endways along the Sides of the Road, as Directions in time of deep Snows, being some of them, as they now stand, eight or nine Feet high. They serve likewise as Memorials of the Skill and Labour requisite to the Performance of so difficult a Work.

IN some particular Spots where there was a proper Space beside the Stones, the Workmen dug Hollows, and, by undermining, dropt them in, where they lie buried so securely as never more to retard the Traveller's Journey; but it was thought a moot Point, even where

it was successful, whether any Time or Labour was saved by this Practice ; for those Pits, for the most part, required to be made very deep and wide, and it could not be foreseen without continual boring whether there might not be Rock above the necessary Depth, which might be a Disappointment after great Labour.

THE Roads on these Moors are now as smooth as *Constitution Hill*, and I have galloped on some of them for Miles together in great Tranquility, which was heightened by Reflection to my former Fatigue, when, for a great Part of the Way, I had been obliged to quit my Horse, it being too dangerous, or impracticable to ride, and even hazardous to pass on Foot.

*The B o g s.*

THERE be two Species of them, viz. Bogs and those the Natives call Peat-Mosses, which yield them their  
Firing,

Firing, many of the former are very large, and sometimes fill up the whole Space between the Feet of the Mountains: They are mostly not much, if any thing, above the Level of the Sea, but I don't know that any Part of the Road is carried through them, or think it practicable; yet, as any Description of them may be new to you, I shall stop a while to give you some Account of my *trotting* one of them, which is reckoned about a Mile over.

My Affairs engaging me to reside for some time among the Hills, I resolved, and was preparing to make a distant Visit, but was told, that a Hill, at the Foot of which I lived, was, in the Descent from it exceeding steep and stony; I was therefore prevailed with to have my Horses led a round-about Way, and to meet me on the other Side.

In lieu of that difficult Way I was to be ferried over a Lake, and to traverse the Bog abovementioned, over which a



Highlander undertook to conduct me ; him I followed close at the Heels, because I soon observed he used a Step unlike to what he did upon firm Ground, and which I could not presently imitate, and also that he chose his Way, here and there, as if he knew where was the least Danger, although, at the same time, the Surface of the Part we were going over seemed to me to be equally indifferent in respect to Safety and Danger.

OUR Weight and the Spring of Motion in many Parts, caused a Shaking all round about us, and the Compression made the Water rise through the Sward, which was in some Parts a kind of short flaggy Grass, and in others a sort of mossy Heath ; but wherever any Rushes grew, I knew, by Experience of the Peat-Mosses I had gone over before, that it was not far to the Bottom.

THIS Rising of Water made me conclude (for my Guide was not intelligible to me) that we had nothing but a Liquid  
3 under

under us, or at most, something like a Quick-sand, and that the *Sward* was only a little toughned by the Intwining of the Roots, and was supported, like Ice, only by Water, or something near as fluid.

I SHALL give you no Particulars of my Visit, further than that the Laird treated me in a very handsome and plentiful manner, and, indeed it was his Interest so to do. But poor *Poke-pudding* was so fatigued, and so apprehensive of Danger on the Bog, that he could not be persuaded to go back again the same Way.

*The Mosses.*

OF these I formerly gave you some superficial Account, but now that I am about to let you know how the Roads were made through them, I shall examine them to the Bottom. When I first saw them, I imagined they were formerly made when Woods were common in the Hills, but since,

by several repeated Laws, destroyed to take away that Shelter which assisted the Highlanders in their Depredations; I say, I have supposed the Leaves of Trees were driven by Winds and lodged in their Passage, from time to time in those Cavities till they were filled up. One thing among others that induced me to this Belief is, that the muddy Substance of them is much like the rotted Leaves in our Woods; but since that time I have been told, that when one of them has been quite exhausted for Fuel, it has grown again, and in the Course of twenty Years has been as fit to be dug for Firing as before. This I can believe, because I have seen many small ones, far from any Inhabitants, swelled above the Surface of the Ground that lies all round about them, and chiefly in the Middle, so as to become a Protuberance, and therefore by Strangers the less suspected, though the deeper and more dangerous.

ALL beneath the Turf is a spongy Earth interwoven with a slender fibrous Vegetable,

Vegetable, something like the smallest Roots of a Shrub, and these a little toughen it, and contribute to the making it good Fewel; but when they are quite, or near, dug out, the Pit is generally almost filled with Water. This, I suppose, arises from Springs which may, for ought I know, have been the first Occasion of these Mosses, which are very deceitful, especially to those who are not accustomed to them, being mostly covered with Heath, like the rest of the Country; and in time of Rains become soft, and sometimes impassable on Foot.

Now, that I have no further Occasion for any Distinction, I shall call every soft Place a Bog, except there be Occasion sometimes to vary the Phrase.

WHEN one of these Bogs has crossed the Way on a stony Moor, there the loose Ground has been dug out down to the Gravel or Rock, and the Hollow filled up in manner following, *viz.*

FIRST



FIRST with a Layer of large Stones, then a smaller Size to fill up the Gaps and raise the Causey higher, and, lastly, two, three or more Feet of Gravel to fill up the Interstices of the small Stones, and form a smooth and binding Surface. This Part of the Road has a Bank on each Side to separate it from a Ditch which is made without-side to receive the Water from the Bog, and, if the Ground will allow it, to convey it by a Trench to a Slope, and thereby in some measure drain it.

IN a rocky Way, where no loose Stones were to be found, if a Bog intervened, and Trees could be had at any portable Distance, the Road has been made solid by Timber and Fascines, crowned with Gravel dug out of the Side of some Hill.

THIS is durable, for the Faggots and Trees lying continually in the Moisture of the Bog will, instead of decaying, become extremely hard, as has been formerly

merly observed of Trees that have been plunged into those Sloughs and lain there, in all Probability, for many Ages. This Causey has likewise a Bank and a Ditch for the Purposes abovementioned.

THERE is one Bog I passed *through* (literally speaking) which is upon the Declivity of a Hill; there the Mud has been dug away for a proper Space, and thrown upon the Bog on either Side, and a Passage made at the Foot of the Hill for the Water to run down into a large Cavity, insomuch, that by continual draining, I rode, as it were, in a very shallow Rivulet running down the Hill upon a Rock (which was made smooth by the Workmen) with the Sides of the Bog high above me on both Sides, like one of the hollow Ways in *England*.

I MUST desire you will consider, that the foregoing Descriptions, as well as these that are to follow are, and will be, only Specimens of the Work, for it would be almost without End to give you all

all the Particulars of so various and extensive a Performance.

## F O R D S.

No Remedy but Bridges has been found for the Inconveniencies and Hazards of these rugged and rapid Passages, for when some of them, in the Beginning, were cleared from the large loose Stones, the next Inundation brought down others in their Room, which else would have been stopped by the Way, and some of those were of a much larger Size than the Stones that had been removed.

THIS was the Case (among others) of a small River, which, however, was exceeding dangerous to ford, and for that reason, the first Bridge was ordered to be built over it; but it gave me a lively Idea how short is human Foresight, especially in new Projects and untried Undertakings.

THE

THE Spring of the Arch was founded upon Rocks, and it was elevated much above the highest Water that had ever been known by the Country People; yet, sometime after it was finished, there happened a sudden Torrent from the Mountains, which brought down Trees and Pieces of Rocks, and by its being placed too near the Issue of Water from between two Hills, though firmly built with Stone, it was crott off not far beneath the Crown of the Arch, as if it had neither Weight nor Solidity.

DECLIVITIES.

By these I mean the sloping Sides of the Hills whereon the new Roads are made.

THE former Ways along those Slopes were only Paths worn by the Feet of the Highlanders and their little *Garrons*. They ran along upwards and downwards, one above another, in such manner



ner as was found most convenient at the first tracing them out; this, I think, I have observed to you formerly.

To these narrow Paths the Passenger was confined (for there is seldom any Choice of the Way you would take in the Highlands) by the Impassibility of the Hollows at the Feet of the Mountains, because those Spaces, in some Parts are filled up with deep Bogs, or fallen Rocks, of which last I have seen many as big as a middling House, and looking up, have observed others at an exceeding Height, in some Measure parted from the main Rock, and threatening the Crush of some of those below. In other Parts there are Lakes beneath, and sometimes, where there were none, it was only by these Paths you could ascend the Hills, still proceeding round the Sides of them from one to another.

THERE the new Roads have been carried on in more regular Curves than  
the

the old Paths, and are dug into the Hills which are sloped away above them ; and where any Rocks have occurred in the Performance, they have been bored and blown away with Gunpowder.

ABOVE the Road are Trenches made to receive Rains, melting Snows, and Springs, which last are in many Places continually issuing out of the Sides of the Hills, being drained away from large Waters collected in Lakes and other Cavities, above, in the Mountains.

FROM the abovementioned Trenches are proper Channels made to convey the Water down the Hills ; these are secured by firm Pavement from being gulled by the Stream, and in Places that required it, there are Stone Walls built behind the Road to prevent the Fall of Earth or Stones from the broken Part of the Declivity.

## W O O D S.

THESE are not only rare in the Way of the new Roads, but I have formerly given you some Description of the Inconvenience and Danger of one of them, and therefore, I shall only add in this Place, that the Trees, for the necessary Space, have been cut down and grub'd up; their fibrous Roots that ran about upon the Surface destroyed, the boggy Part removed; the Rock smoothed, and the Crannies firmly filled up, and all this in such manner as to make of it a very commodious Road.

## S T E E P A S C E N T S.

As the Heights, for the most Part, are attained, as I have been saying, by going round the Sides of the Hills from one to another, the exceeding steep Ascents are not very common in the ordinary Passages, but where they are, the Inconvenience and Difficulties of them have been removed.

I SHALL

I SHALL only instance in one, which, indeed is confessed to be the worst of them all. This is the *Coriarack Mountain*, beforementioned, which rises in the Way that leads from *Dalwhinny* to *Fort Augustus*. It is above a Quarter of 2 Mile of perpendicular Height, and was passed by few, besides the Soldiery when the Garrisons were changed, as being the nearest Way from one of the Barracks to another; and had it not been for the Conveniency of that Communication, this Part of the new Roads had never been thought of.

THIS Mountain is so near the Perpendicular, in some Parts, that it was doubtful whether the Passenger, after great Labour, should get upwards, or return much quicker than he advanced.

THE Road over it, not to mention much Roughness (which I believe you have had enough of by this time, and



are likely to have more) is carried on upon the South Declivity of the Hill by seventeen Traverses (like the Course of a Ship when she is turning to Windward) by Angles still advancing higher and higher; yet little of it is to be seen below, by Reason of Flats, Hollows and Windings that intercept the Sight, and nothing could give you a general View of it, unless one could be supposed to be placed high above the Mountain in the Air. This is much unlike your Hills in the South, that in some convenient Situation of the Eye are seen in one continued smooth Slope from the Bottom to the Top.

EACH of the abovementioned Angles is about seventy or eighty Yards in Length, except in a few Places where the Hill would not admit of all that Extent.

THESE Traverses upward, and the Turnings of their Extremities are supported

ported on the Out-side of the Road by Stone Walls from ten to fifteen Feet in Height.

THUS that steep Ascent, which was so difficult to be attained, even by the Foot-passenger, is rendered every where more easy for Wheel-carriages than *Highgate Hill*.

ON the North Side of this Mountain, at a Place named *Snugburgh*, from its Situation, there is a narrow Pass between two exceeding high and steep Hills. These are joined together by two Arches supported by Walls, to take off the Sharpness of the short Descent, which otherwise could not have been practicable for the lightest Wheel-carriage whatever, for it was difficult even for Horse or Man.

## PRECIPICES.

I SHALL say nothing in this Place of such of them as are any thing tolerable to the Mind, in passing them over, though a false Step might render them fatal, as there would be no stopping till dashed against the Rocks. I shall only mention two that are the most terrible, which I have gone over several Times, but always occasionally, not as the shortest Way, or by Choice, but to avoid extensive Bogs, or swelling Waters in Time of Rain, which I thought more dangerous in the other Way.

ONE of these Precipices is on the North Side of the *Murray Frith*, where no Roads have been made; the other is on a Mountain, southward of this Town.

BOTH

BOTH these, as I have said above, were useful upon Occasion ; but the latter is now rendered unnecessary, as the old round - about Way is made smooth, and Bridges built over the dangerous Waters, and therefore nothing has been done to this Precipice. Nor indeed was it thought practicable to widen the Path, by Reason of the Steepness of the Side of the Hill that rises above it.

I THINK the ordinary Proverb was never more manifestly verified, than it now is, in these two several Ways ; *viz.* That the farthest Way about, &c. Yet, I make no Doubt, the Generality of the Highlanders will prefer the Precipice to the Gravel of the Road, and a greater Number of Steps.

NOT far from this steep Place, I once baited my Horses with Oats, carried with me, and laid upon the Snow



in the Month of *July*. And indeed it is there, instead of Rain, Snow or Sleet all the Year round.

Thus far I have, chiefly, in general Terms described the Difficulties that attended the making new Roads, and the Methods taken to surmount them, which was all I at first intended; but as some of the greatest Obstacles, which yet remain undescribed, were met with in the Way between this Town and *Fort William*. I shall, previous to any Account of them, endeavour to give you some Idea of this Passage between the Mountains, wherein lies no small Part of the Roads; and this I shall the rather do, because that Hollow, for Length and Figure, is unlike any Thing of the Kind I have seen in other Parts of the Highlands; and I hope to accomplish all that I have to say of it, before I leave this Town, being very shortly to make a Northern Progress among the Hills, wherein I shall find  
none

none of those Conveniencies we now have on this Side the *Murray Frith*.

THIS Opening would be a surprizing Prospect to such as have never seen a high Country, being a Mixture of Mountains, Waters, Heath, Rocks, Precipices, and scattered Trees; and that for so long an Extent, in which the Eye is confined within the Space. And therefore, if I should pretend to give you a full Idea of it, I should put myself in the Place of one that has had a strange preposterous Dream, and because it has made a strong Impression on him, he fondly thinks he can convey it to others in the same Likeness, as it remains painted on his Memory; and in the End wonders at the Coldness with which it was received.

THIS Chasm begins about four Miles West of *Inverness*, and running across the Island, divides the northern from the southern Highlands. It is chiefly taken

up by Lakes bounded on both Sides by high Mountains, which almost every where (being very steep at the Feet) run down exceeding deep into the Water. The first of the Lakes, beginning from the East, is *Loch-Nefs*, which I have formerly mentioned. It lies in a Line, along the Middle of it, as direct as an artificial Canal. This I have observed myself from a rising Ground at the East End, by directing a small Telescope to *Fort Augustus*, at the other Extreme.

I HAVE said it is straight by the Middle only, because the Sides are irregular, being so made by the jutting of the Feet of the Hills into the Water on either Side, as well as by the Spaces between them; and the various Breadths of different Parts of the Lake.

THE Depth, the Nature of the Water, and the remarkable Cataracts on the South Side, have been occasionally mentioned

mentioned in former Letters; and I think I have told you, it is one and twenty *Scots* Miles in Length, and from one to near two Miles in Breadth.

It has hardly any perceptible Current, notwithstanding it receives a vast Conflux of Waters from the bordering Mountains, by Rivers and Rivulets that discharge themselves into it; yet all the Water that visibly runs from it, in the greatest Rains, is limited in its Course by the River *Nefs*, by which it has its Issue into the Sea, and that River is not in some Places above twenty Yards wide, and therefore I think the greatest Part of the Superfluity must be drained away by subterraneous Passages.

I HAVE told you long ago, that it never freezes in the calmest and severest Frost; and by its Depth (being in some Parts 360 Yards) and by its Breadth, and the violent Winds that pass through the



the Opening, it often has a Swell not much inferior to the Ocean.

IN several Parts on the Sides of the Lake, you see Rocks of a Kind of coarse black Marble, and I think as hard as the best; these rise to a considerable Height, which never till lately were trod by human Foot, for the old Way made a considerable Circuit from this Lake, and did not come to it, but at the West-End. In other Places are Woods upon the steep Declivities, which serve to abate the Deformity of those Parts; I say abate, for the Trees being, as I said above, confusedly scattered one above another, they do not hide them. All the rest is Heath and Rock.

SOME Time ago, there was a Vessel of about five and twenty or thirty Tons Burthen build at the East End of this Lake, and called the *Highland Gally*.

SHE

SHE carries fix or eight Pattereroes, and is employed to transport Men, Provision, and Baggage to *Fort Augustus*, at the other End of the Lake.

THE Master has an Appointment from the Government, to navigate this Vessel, and to keep her in Repair.

WHEN she made her first Trip, she was mightily adorned with Colours, and fired her Guns several Times, which was a strange Sight to the Highlanders, who had never seen the like before ; at least, on that in-land Lake.

FOR my own Part, I was not less amused with the Sight of a good Number of Highland Men and Women upon the highest Part of a Mountain over-against us ; I mean the highest that appeared to our View.

THESE People, I suppose, were brought to the Precipice, from some Flat behind,  
3 by

by the Report of the Guns (for even a single Voice is understood at an incredible Height) And as they stood, they appeared to the naked Eye, not to be a Foot high in Stature: But by the Assistance of a pretty long Glass, I could plainly see their Surprize and Admiration. And I must confess I wondered, not much less, to see so many People on such a monstrous Height, who could not inhabit there in Winter; till I reflected it was the Time of the Year for them to go up to their Sheelings. And I was told that they, like us, were not far from a spacious Lake, tho' in that elevated Situation.

I NEED not trouble you with a Description of the other two Waters and their Boundaries, there being but little Difference between them and the former; only here the old Ways, such as they were, ran along upon the Sides of the Hills, which were in a great Measure rocky Precipices, and that these Lakes  
are

are not quite so wide, and incline a little more to the Southward of the West, than the other.

THE next Lake to *Loch-Nefs* (which as I have said is 21 Miles in Length) is *Loch Oick*; this is four Miles long, and *Loch Lochy*, the last of the three is nine, in all 34 Miles, Part of the 48, which is the whole Length of the Opening, and at the End thereof is *Fort William* on the West Coast, to which the Sea flows, as it does likewise to *Inverness* on the East. Thus the whole Extent of Ground between Sea and Sea, is but fourteen Miles.

HERE I must stop a little to acquaint you with a Spot of Ground, which I take to be something remarkable. This I had passed over several Times, without observing any Thing extraordinary in it, and perhaps should never have taken Notice of it, if it had not been



been pointed out to me by one of the Natives.

ABOUT the Middle of the Neck of Land, that divides the Lakes *Oick* and *Locky*, (which is but one Mile) not far from the Center of the Opening, there descends from the Hills, on the South-Side, a Burne or Rivulet, which as it falls upon the Plain, divides into two Streams, without any visible Ridge to part them. And one of them runs through the Lakes *Oick* and *Ness* into the East-Sea, and the other takes the quite contrary Course, and passes through *Loch Locky*, into the Western Ocean.

THIS, and the short Space of Land abovementioned, have given Birth to several Projects for making a navigable Communication across the Island; not only to divide, effectually, the Highlands by the Middle, but to save the tedious, costly, and hazardous Voyages

ages through St. *George's* Channel, or otherwise round by the Isles of *Orkney*.

THIS Spot the Projectors say is a Level between the two Seas, pointed out as it were by the Hand of Nature; and they pretend the Space of Land to be cut through is practicable.

BUT it would be an incredible Expence to cut fourteen navigable Miles in so rocky a Country, and there is yet a stronger Objection, which is, that the whole Opening lies in so direct a Line, and the Mountains that bound it, are so high, the Wind is confined in its Passage as it were in the Nozel of a Pair of Bellows; so that, let it blow from what Quarter it will, without the Opening, it never varies much from East or West within.

THIS would render the Navigation so precarious, that hardly any Body would venture on it, not to mention the

the violent Flurries of Wind that rush upon the Lakes by Squalls from the Spaces between the Hills, and also the rocky Shores, want of Harbour, and Anchorage; and perhaps there might appear other unforeseen Inconveniencies and Dangers, if it were possible the Work could be compleated.

THERE are three Garrisons in this Line, which reaches from East to West, viz. *Fort George* at *Inverness*, *Fort Augustus* at *Killichumen*, and *Fort William* in *Lochabber*, and every one of them pretty equally distant from one another; and the Line might be made yet more effectual by Redoubts, at proper Distances between them, to prevent the sudden joining of Numbers, ill affected to the Government.

HAVING given you some Account of this Chasm, I shall, in the next Place, say something of the Road that lies quite through it, together with some  
Diffi-

Difficulties that attended the Work, of which all that Part which runs along near the Edges of the Lakes, is on the South Side ; but as I have already bestowed so many Words upon Subjects partly like this, I shall confine myself to very few Particulars, and of the rest which may come under those former Descriptions, I need say no more, if I have been intelligible.

I SHALL begin with that Road, which goes along above *Loch-Nefs*.

THIS is entirely new, as I have hinted before, and indeed I might say the same of every Part, but I mean there was no Way at all along the Edge of this Lake, till this Part of the Road was made.

IT is, good Part of it, made out of Rocks, but among them all I shall mention but one, which is of a great Length ; and, as I have said before, as hard as Marble.



THERE the Miners hung by Ropes from the Precipice over the Water (like *Shakespeare's* Gatherers of Samphire from *Dover* Cliffs) to bore the Stone, in order to blow away a necessary Part from the Face of it, and the rest likewise was chiefly done by Gunpowder ; but when any Part was fit to be left as it was, being flat and smooth, it was brought to a Roughness proper for a Stay to the Feet, and in this Part, and all the rest of the Road, where the Precipices were like to give Horror or Uneasiness to such as might pass over them in Carriages, tho' at a good Distance from them they are secured to the Lake-side by Walls, either left in the Working, or built up with Stone, to a Height proportioned to the Occasion.

Now, for the Space of twelve Miles, it is an even Terrass in every Part, from whence the Lake may be seen from

from End to End, and from whence the romantick Prospect of the rugged Mountains would, I dare say, for its Novelty, be more entertaining to you, than it is to me; I say it might be agreeable to you, who not having these hideous Productions of Nature near you, wantonly procure even bad Imitations of them in little artificial Rocks, and diminutive Cataracts of Water. But as some Painters travel to *Italy*, in order to study or copy the most admirable Performances of the great Masters, for their own Instruction, so I would advise your Artisans, in that Way, to visit this Country for their better Information.

THE next Part of this Road, which I am about to speak of, is that which lies along the Side of the Hills, arising from the Edge of *Loch-Oick*.

THE Dangers of this Part of the old Way began at the Top of a steep  
Z 2
Ascent,

Ascent, of about fifty or sixty Yards from the little Plain that parts this Lake and *Loch-Nefs*; and not far from the Summit is a Part they call the *Maiden's Leap*, of which they tell a strange romantick Story, not worth the Remembrance. There the Rocks project over the Lake, and the Path was so rugged and narrow, that the Highlanders were obliged, for their Safety, to hold by the Rocks and Shrubs as they passed, with the Prospect of Death beneath them.

THIS was not the only dangerous Part, but for three Miles together, Part of the four (which I have said is the Length of this Lake) it was nowhere safe, and in many Places more difficult, and as dangerous, as at the Entrance; for the Rocks were so steep and uneven, that the Passenger was obliged to creep on his Hands and Knees.

THESE

THESE Precipices were so formidable, to some that they chose rather to cross the Plain abovementioned, and wade a River on the opposite Side of the Opening, which by others was thought more hazardous in its Kind, than the Way which their Fear excited them to avoid; and when they had passed that Water, they had a wide Circuit to make among steep and rugged Hills, before they could get again into the Way they were to go.

THE last Part of the Road along the Lakes (as I have divided it into three, runs along on the Declivities of *Loch Lochy*, and reaches the whole Length of that Lake, which, as I have said before, is nine Miles.

THIS was much of the same Nature as the last, exceeding steep, with Rocks in several Places, hanging over the Water, and required a great Quantity of



Gunpowder; but both this and the other two, are now as commodious as any other of the Roads in the Highlands, which every where (bating Ups and Downs) are equal in Goodness to the best in *England*.

I SHALL say nothing of the Way from the End of this Lake to *Fort William*, any more than I have done of the Road from *Inverness* to *Loch Ness*, or the Spaces between the Lakes; because they may be comprehended in the ordinary Difficulties already described.

BUT I might acquaint you with many other Obstacles which were thought, at first, to be insurmountable; such as *Slock Moach*, between *Ruthven* and *Inverness*, the rocky Pass of *Killicranky* in *Athol*, between *Dunkeld* and the *Blair*, &c.

I SHALL

I SHALL only say, that I have formerly given you some Description of the first, but without a Name, in the Account of an Incurfion I made to the Hills from *Inverness*; but both this and the other, which were very bad, are now made easily passable.

THE Name of *Slock Moach* is interpreted by the Natives, a *Den of Hogs*, having been, as they say it was formerly, a noted Harbour for Thieves; who, in Numbers, lay in wait within that narrow and deep Cavity, to commit their Depredations upon Cattle and Passengers. I suppose this Name was given to it, when Swine were held in Abomination among the Highlanders.

THE first Design of removing a vast fallen Piece of a Rock, was entertained by the Country People with great

Derision; of which I saw one Instance myself.

A VERY old wrinkled Highland Woman, upon such an Occasion, standing over against me, when the Soldiers were fixing their Engines, seemed to sneer at it, and said something to an Officer of one of the Highland Companies. I imagined she was making a Jest of the Undertaking, and asked the Officer what she said? I will tell you her Words, said he :

“ What are the Fools a doing ? That  
“ Stone will lie there for ever for all  
“ them.” But when she saw that vast  
Bulk begin to rise, though by slow Degrees, she set up a hideous *Irish* Yell, took to her Heels, run up the Side of a Hill just by, like a young Girl, and never looked behind her, while she was within our Sight. I make no Doubt she thought it was Magick, and the Workmen Warlocks.

THIS,

THIS, indeed, was the Effect of an old Woman's Ignorance and Superstition; but a Gentleman, esteemed for his good Understanding, when he had seen the Experiment of the first Rock above *Loch Ness*, he said to the Officer that directed the Work, "When first  
"I heard of this Undertaking, I was  
"strangely scandalized to think how  
"shamefully you would come off;  
"but now I am convinced there is  
"nothing can stand before you and  
"Gunpowder."

NOTWITHSTANDING there may be no Remains of my former Letters, I believe your Memory may help you to reflect what wretched Lodging there was in the Highlands, when those Epistles were written. This Evil is now remedied, as far as could be done, and in that Road, where there were none but Huts of Turf for a hundred Miles together, there now, are Houses with  
*Chimneys,*



*Chimneys*, built with Stone and Lime, at ten or twelve Miles Distance one from another; and tho' they are not large, yet are they well enough adapted to the Occasion of Travellers, who are seldom many at a Time in that Country. But I would not be understood, that there is any better Accommodation than before, besides warm Lodging. Another Thing is, there are Pillars set up at the End of every five Miles, mostly upon Eminencies, which may not only amuse the Passenger, and lessen the Tedioufness of the Way, but prevent his being deceived in Point of Time, in Rain, Snow, Drift or approaching Night.

BUT the last, and I think the greatest Conveniency, is the Bridges; which prevent the Dangers of the terrible Fords.

OF these I shall say but little, because to you they are no Novelty. They  
are

are forty in Number, some of them single Arches of forty or fifty Feet diameter, mostly founded upon Rocks, others are composed of two; one of three, and one of five Arches. This last is over the *Tay*, and is the only Bridge upon that wild River, as has been said before. It is built with Astler-Stone, and is 370 Feet in Length. The middle Arch is 60 Feet Diameter, and it bears the following Inscription, made *Latin* from the *English*, as I have been told, by Dr. *Friend*, Master of *Westminster* School.

*Mirare*

*Viam hanc Militarem*

*Ultra Romanos Terminos*

*M. Passuum CCL. hac illac extensam*

*Tesquis & Paludibus insultantem*

*Per Rupes Montesque patefactam*

*Et indignanti Tavo*

*Ut cernis instratam*

*Opus hoc arduum suâ solertiâ*

*Et decennali Militum Operâ*

*Anno*

*Anno Ær. Christæ 1733, perfecit G. Wade.*

*Copiarum in Scotia Præfectus.*

*Ecce quantum valeant*

*Regia Georgii Secundi Auspicia!*

THE Objections made to these new Roads and Bridges, by some in the several Degrees of *Condition* among the Highlanders, are in Part, as follow, *viz.*

I. THOSE Chiefs and other Gentlemen complain, that thereby an easy Passage is opened into their Country for Strangers, who, in Time, by their Suggestions of Liberty, will destroy or weaken that Attachment of their Vassals, which it is so necessary for them to support and preserve.

THAT their Fastnesses being laid open, they are deprived of that Security from Invasion, which they formerly enjoyed.

THAT

THAT the Bridges, in particular, will render the ordinary People effeminate, and less fit to pass the Waters in other Places, where there are none.

AND there is a pecuniary Reason, concealed, relating to some foreign Courts, which, to you, I need not explain.

II. THE middling Order say, the Roads are to them an Inconvenience, instead of being useful, as they have turned them out of their old Ways; for their Horses, being never shod, the Gravel would soon whet away their Hoofs, so as to render them unserviceable. Whereas the Rocks and Moor-Stones, though together they make a rough Way, yet considered separately, they are generally pretty smooth on the Surface where they tread, and the Heath is always easy to their Feet. To this I have been inconsiderately asked,



ed, why then do they not shoe their Horses?

THIS Question is easily put, and costs nothing but a few various Sounds. But where is the Iron, the Forge, the Farrier, the People within a reasonable Distance to maintain him? And lastly, where is the principal *Requisite*, Money?

III. THE lowest Class, who, many of them, at some Times, cannot compass a Pair of Shoes for themselves, they alledge, that the Gravel is intolerable to their naked Feet; and the Complaint has extended to their thin *Brogues*.

IT is true they do sometimes, for these Reasons go without the Road, and ride or walk in very incommodious Ways. This has induced some of our Countrymen, especially such as have been at *Minorca* (where Roads of this

this Kind have likewise been made) to accuse the Highlanders of *Spanish* Obstinacy, in refusing to make Use of so great a Conveniency; purely, because it is a Novelty introduced by the *English*. But why do the black Cattle do the same Thing? Certainly for the Ease of their Feet.

NOR can I believe that either Highlanders or *Spaniards* are such Fools as to deprive themselves of any considerable Benefit, upon a Principle so ridiculous. But I fear it is our own Pride that suggests such contemptuous Thoughts of Strangers; I have seen a great deal of it, and have often thought of *Lochart's* Accusation in a Book that goes under the Name of his Memoirs; where he says — The *English* despise all Nations but their own, for which all the World hates them; or to that Purpose. But whether his Observation be just or not, it is in the Breast of every one to determine for himself.

himself. For my own Part, ever since I have known the Highlands, I never doubted but the Natives had their Share of natural Understanding, with the rest of Mankind.

NOTWITHSTANDING I have finished my Account of the Roads, which was all I at first intended; and although this Letter is almost grown into a Volume, yet like other great Talkers, I cannot conclude it with Satisfaction to myself, till I have told my Tale quite out.

*Fort Augustus* at *Killichumen* is not only near the Middle of the Opening, of which I have said so much, but is likewise reckoned to be the most central Point of the habitable Part of the Highlands.

THE old *Barrack* was built in the Year 1716; I need not tell you upon what Occasion. It stands upon a rising

sing Ground at about two or three  
 hundred Yards Distance from the Head  
 of *Loch Ness*, and the new Fort is  
 just upon the Border of that Water.  
 Before there was any great Progress  
 made in building that Fortrefs, it was  
 proposed to make a covered Way of  
 Communication between both ; and  
 that it should be the principal Garri-  
 son of the Highlands, and the Resi-  
 dence of a Governor, who was like-  
 wise to command the other two in  
 that Line, viz. *Fort George* at *Inver-  
 ness*, and *Fort William* in *Lochaber*,  
 which two last were to be under the  
 Command of Lieutenant-Governors ;  
 this was the military Scheme. But be-  
 sides, there was a civil Project on Foot,  
 which was, to build a Town after the  
*English* Manner, and procure for it all  
 the Privileges and Immunities of a royal  
 Borough in *Scotland*.

THESE Advantages, it was said, would  
 invite Inhabitants to settle there, not  
 only from the Lowlands, but even from



*England*, and make it the principal Mart of the Highlands, by which Means the Natives would be drawn thither as to the Center; and by accustoming themselves to Strangers, grow desirous of a more commodious Way of living than their own, and be enabled by Traffick to maintain it. And thus (it was said) they would be weaned from their barbarous Customs. But surely this Scheme was as *wild* as the Highlanders, whom it was proposed to *tame* by it, yet it was entertained for some Months with Fondness. But Anger blinds and deceives the Judgment by the promised Sweets of Revenge, as Avarice does by the pleasing Thoughts of Gain, though unlawful. And I think I may premise to what I am about to say, that successful Revenge is wicked; but an impotent Desire of it is not only wicked, but ridiculous. Perhaps you will say I moralize, and you do not yet see the Application, but you will hardly believe, that this *Utopian* Town had no other Foundation than

than a Pique against two or three of the Magistrates of *Inverness*; for whose Transgression their Town was to be humbled by this Contrivance.

I SHALL wave all Considerations of the Intent to punish a whole Community upon a Prejudice taken against two or three of them; and only shew you how improbable the Success of such an Undertaking would have been. And if it had been likely, how distant the Prospect of the Pleasure proposed by it.

A TOWN of any Manner of Consideration would take up all, or most Part of the *Country* (for so the Highlanders call every little arable Flat that lies between the Mountains) and the Place is not above five and twenty Miles (including the Lake) from *Inverness*, which is a Sea-port Town, and well situated for Improvement of foreign Trade, and home Manufactures. But the inner Parts of the Highlands will not admit even of Manufacto-

ries, for the Inhabitants are few that can be spared from their Farms, which though they are but small, are absolutely necessary to Life; and they are scattered among the Hills at great Distances, and the habitable Spaces are generally not large enough to contain any considerable Number of People, or the whole Country within reach all round about, sufficient to furnish them with necessary Provisions. And lastly, Strangers will not be admitted among the Clans.

By the Way I have been told, the *Welsh* are not much less averse than the Highlanders to any Settlement of Strangers among them, though extremely hospitable to Visitants; and such as have some temporary Business to transact in their Country. But to return to my Purpose:

As to the Corn received by the Lairds from their Tenants, as Rent *in Kind*, and the Cattle, when marketable; the  
first

first has always been sold by Contract to Lowland-Merchants, and the Cattle are driven to such Fairs and Markets of the Low Country as are nearest, or otherwise commodious or beneficial to the Drovers and their Employers. And therefore there is no Manner of Likelihood, that either the one or the other should be brought to any Highland Market.

I HAVE told you in a former Letter what *Kinds* and *Quantities* of Merchandise were usually brought by the Highlanders, to the Fairs at *Inverness*.

IT was a Supposition very extraordinary to suppose, that any Lowlanders who could subsist in another Place, would shut themselves up in such a Prison, without any reasonable Prospect of Advantage; and I verily believe there is not an *Englishman*, when he knew the Country, but would think of a Settlement there with more Horror than any *Russian* would do of Banishment to *Siberia*.



BUT lastly, if it were possible to suppose there were none of these Obstacles, how long a Time must have been required to *people* this new Colony, and to render it capable to rival an old established Town like *Inverness*? I need not recite the Proverb of the growing Grass; it is too obvious.

YET if the Inhabitants of the new Settlement proposed, could have lived upon Air, I verily believe they would have been fed with better Diet, than at *Montpelier*.

THUS am I providing Work for myself, but am not so sure it will be Entertainment to you; for now I have happened to speak of the Healthfulness of the Spot, I must tell you whereupon I found my Opinion.

THE Officers and Soldiers garrisoned in that Barrack, for many Successions have found it to be so; and several of them who were fallen into  
a vale-

a valetudinary State in other Parts, have there recover'd their Health in a short Time. Among other Instances, I shall give you only one, which I thought almost a Miracle.

A CERTAIN Officer of the Army, when in *London*, was advised by his Physicians to go into the Country for better Air, as you know is customary with them, when mere Shame deters them from taking further Fees; and likewise that the Patient may be hid under-ground, out of the Reach of all reflecting Observation, within the Circuit of their Practice. But the *Corps* he belonged to, being then quartered in the Highlands, he resolved by gentle Journeys to endeavour to reach it, but expected (as he told me) nothing but Death by the Way; however he came to that Place, one Evening, unknown to me, though I was then in the Barrack, and the next Morning early, I saw upon the Parade a Stranger, which is there an unusual Sight.

A a 4

He

He was in a deep Consumption, sadly emaciated, and with Despair in his Countenance, surveying the Tops of the Mountains. I went to him, and after a few Words of Welcome, &c. his uppermost Thoughts became audible in a Moment. Lord! says he, to what a Place am I come? There can nothing but Death be expected here! I own I had conceived a good Opinion of that Part of the Country, and therefore, as well as in common Complaisance, should in Course, have given him some Encouragement; but I do not know how it was. I happened at that Instant to be, as it were, inspired with a Confidence not ordinary with me, and told him peremptorily and positively the Country would cure him; and repeated it several Times, as if I knew it would be so. How ready is Hope with her Assistance! Immediately I observed his Features to clear up, like the Day, when the Sun begins to peep over the Edge of a Cloud.

To be short, he mended daily in his Health, grew perfectly well in a little Time, obtained Leave to return to *England*, and soon after married a Woman with a considerable Fortune.

I KNOW so well your Opinion of the Doctor's Skill that, if I should tell you, there was not a Physician in the Country, you would say, it was that very *Want* which made the Air so healthy, and was the Cause of that wonderful Cure.

THIS poor, but wholesome Spot reminds me of a *Quack* that mounted a Stage in *Westminster*, but was there very unsuccessful in the Sale of his Packets: At the End of his Harangue he told his Mob-audience (among whom, being but a Boy, myself was one) that he should immediately truss up his Baggage and be gone, because he found they had no Occasion for Physick; for, says he, you live in an Air so healthy, that where one of you dies, there are twenty that run away.

BUT



BUT to proceed to a Conclusion, which I foresee is not far off.

AT *Fort William*, which is not above three or four and twenty Miles Westward of *Fort Augustus*, I have heard the People talk as familiarly of a Shower (as they call it) of nine or ten Weeks, as they would do of any thing else that was not out of the ordinary Course; but the Clouds that are brought over Sea by the Westerly Winds are there attracted and broke by the exceeding high Mountains, and mostly exhausted before they reach the Middle of the Highlands at *Fort Augustus*; and nothing has been more common with us about *Inverness*, on the East Coast, than to ride or walk to recreate ourselves in Sun-shine, when we could clearly see through the Opening for Weeks together, the West Side of the Island involved in thick Clouds. This was often the Occasion of a *good-natured* Triumph with us to observe what a *Pickle* our opposite Neighbours were

were in. But I am told the Difference, in that Particular, between the East and Western Part of *England* near the Coast is much the same in Proportion to the Height of the Hills.

I HAVE but one Thing more to take Notice of in relation to the Spot of which I have been so long a speaking; and that is, I have been sometimes vexed with a little Plague (if I may use the Expression) but don't you think I am too grave upon the Subject; there are great Swarms of little Flies which the Natives call *Malboulakins*; *Houlack*, they tell me, signifies, in the Country Language a *Fly*, and *Houlakin* is the Diminutive of that Name. These are so very small, that seperately, they are but just perceptible, and that is all, and being of a blackish Colour, when a Number of them settles upon the Skin, they make it look as if it was dirty; there they soon bore with their little *Augers* into the Pores, and change the Face from black to red.

THEY

THEY are only troublesome (I should say intolerable) in Summer, when there is a profound Calm, for the least Breath of Wind immediately disperses them, and the only Refuge from them is the House, into which I never knew them to enter. Sometimes when I have been talking to any one, I have (though with the utmost Self-denial) endured their Stings to watch his Face, and see how long they would suffer him to be quiet, but in three or four Seconds he has slapped his Hand upon his Face, and in great Wrath cursed the little Vermin; but I have found the same Torment in some other Parts of the Highlands where Woods were at no great Distance.

HERE I might say, if it did not something favour of a *Pun*, that I have related to you the most *minute* Circumstance of this long and streight *Opening* of the Mountains.

As my former Letters relating to this Country were the Effect of your Choice,  
I could

I could then apologize for them with a tolerable good Grace, but now that I have obtruded myself upon you, without so much as asking your Consent, or giving you the least Notice, I have divested myself of that Advantage, and therefore I shall take the quite contrary Course, and boldly justify myself in what I have done.

You know there is no other Rule to judge of the Quality of many Things but by Comparison; and this being of that Nature, I do affirm with the last Confidence (for I have not been here so long for Nothing) that the following Subjects are inferior to mine either for Information or Entertainment, *viz.*

1st. THE Genealogy of a particular Family, in which but very few others are interested. And, by the by (for you know I am apt to digress) it must be great Good-nature and Christian Charity to suppose it impossible that any one of the *auxiliary Sex* should step out of the



the Way to the *Aid* of some other in the many Successions of five hundred Years ; and if that should happen, I would know what *Relation* there then is between him that boasts of his Ancestry and the Founder of the Family ; certainly none but the Estate, and if that which is the main Prop, should fail, the high Family would soon tumble from its Eminence, but this is but very little of that just Ridicule that attends this kind of Vanity.

WE are told that none are Gentlemen among the *Chinese* but such as have rendered themselves worthy of the Title.

2dly. TEDIOUS Collections of the Sentiments of great Numbers of Authors upon Subjects that, in all Likelyhood had never any Being—but this is a Parade of Reading.

3dly. TRIFLING Antiquities hunted out of their mouldy Recesses, which serve to no other Purpose but to expose the injudicious Searcher.

4thly.

4thly. TIRESOME Criticisms upon a single Word, when it is not of the least Consequence whether there is, or ever was, any such *Sound*.

5thly. Dissertations upon Butterflies, which would take up almost as much Time in the Reading as the whole Life of that Insect; *cum multis aliis*.

THIS small Scrap of Latin has escaped me, and I think it is the only *Air* of Learning (as they call it) that I have given to any of my Letters from the Beginning to this Time, and even now I might have expressed the Sense of it in *homely English* with as few Words, and a Sound as agreeable to the Ear. But some are as fond of larding with Latin as a *French* Cook is with Bacon, and each of them makes of his Performance a kind of Linsey-woolsey Composition.

As this Letter is grown too bulky for the Post, it will come to your Hands  
by

## 368    L E T T E R    XXVI.

by the Favour of a Gentleman, Major  
——, who is to set out for *London*  
to-morrow Morning, upon an Affair that  
requires his Expedition.

I CAN justly recommend him to your  
Acquaintance, as I have already referred  
him to yours; and I do assure you, that  
by his ingenious and cheerful Conver-  
sation, he has not a little contributed, for  
a Twelve-month passed to render my  
Exile more tolerable. It is true, I might  
have sent the Sheets in Parcels, but I  
have chosen rather to surprize you with  
them all at once, and I dare say, bating  
Accidents, you will have the last of  
them sooner by his Means than by the  
ordinary Conveyance.

F I N I S.

6 JY 68

